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MEMOIRS

OF

ADMIRAL SIR SIDNEY SMITH,

K. C. B., &c.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "RATTLIN THE REEFER," &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

1839.

867.

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MEMOIRS,

&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory Remarks—The chivalric character of Sir Sidney Smith briefly noticed—A succinct account of his family—An anecdote indicative of his future character.

It has always been the heaviest calamity attendant upon mankind, that war has supplied the world with its great men and its heroes. History has afforded us a record of ten conquerors, and men strong in battle, for one just and good man. Such is our natural depravity, that the same remark may be applied, up to the recorded advent of our Saviour, to the Holy Scriptures themselves. It is true that Christianity has pointed out to us other and better glories than those

obtained by the waste of human blood, and the woe and wail of war. But this God-born revelation has been too often heard only to be scoffed at and disregarded. Still worse, it has many times been made the plea for slaughter and the defence of atrocities, in unlimited murder, the most revolting. Men have ever looked upon carnage as the royal road and the short cut to glory.

This being the case, it necessarily follows that the pursuits of war will hold out the most temptation to the ambitious and those conscious of much talent. The competition for military pre-eminence will always be great, and those who may be so fortunate as to obtain that pre-eminence must consequently be found to possess some great superiority over the rest of those who are striving in the same race, though this superiority seldom amounts to real greatness, even in the false worldly sense,—in the true, philosophical, and christian, scarcely ever.

Let it not be thought that we undervalue the great natural talents and the high and extensive acquirements that are necessary to form the successful and accomplished commander. They certainly are of the broad, the open, and the palpable order. Though they are not veiled in the highest heaven of philosophic contemplation, or

require to be brought from the deepest mines of thought and mental abstraction, yet must they be of that sound, sterling, and well-working nature that a strong mind alone can master—a clear one employ them. We detest war—yet, with the general feeling, we admire the warrior.

We have commenced with this somewhat deprecatory introduction, lest hereafter, being carried away by our admiration of the military character of the subject of these Memoirs, we should be thought, in our enthusiasm, to wish to place him in a rank too elevated among those who have achieved for themselves the title of "Great." All our panegyric must be listened to with a reference to classes of greatness far beyond the reach of the mere warrior.

And, beyond the laurels of the mere warrior, Sir Sidney Smith has won for himself a meed of which no vast desolator or wholesale conqueror can boast. With the prominent heroes, of whatever time, ancient or modern, a well-regulated mind hardly can be brought to sympathise. We admire and shudder. We look upon them as sublime calamities. These fiery scourges in the hands of Providence seem to be so far above or beyond our human affinities, that we can barely entertain with them one feeling in unison. Were they, or any one of them, living, and within

the reach of our every-day communion, were it not for the impulse of vanity, we should never think of offering them our friendship, exposing to them our amiable weaknesses, or of seeking from them an interchange of familiar thoughts. Of their countenance we might be proud, and their approbation we might covet, but of their affection we should never dream.

With this class, neither in the multitude of his victories, nor in vastness of any one conquest, can Sir Sidney Smith be associated. But a higher degree of praise, a more lofty because a better honour, is due to him. In his person, though he has not revived the age of chivalry, he has shown what is the real splendour of the chivalric character. All his public actions seem to have been less the offspring of mere military calculation and naval science, than of the intuition of the most romantic courage and the highest moral feeling, always controlled by a prudence and intrepidity that no danger, however sudden, could surprise, and no difficulty, however menacing, vanquish. That such is the principal feature of his character the following pages will fully exemplify.

The prepossession in favour of good blood should not be regarded as a prejudice. We should not deny to the human what is conceded

to the other animal races. This is less a moral than a mere physical question, though the results are most conspicuously and best shown in moral action. Revelation teaches us, and we devoutly conform to the lesson, that, in the eye of the Omnipotent, all men are equal. This is in a religious sense. But we know that, in a worldly view, not only are all men the one differing from the other, but the races of men show a distinction still more marked. William Sidney Smith possesses the advantage of good blood in a very high degree.

Sir Sidney Smith is a collateral and no very remote relative to the late Lord Chief Baron Sir Sidney Stafford Smithe, and of the SMYTHE Lord Viscount Strangford. These are descendants from Customer Smith, who flourished in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Consequently, the ancient and genuine orthography of the name is Smythe; but as the subject of this biography has always in his official documents spelt his name SMITH, and as in that spelling the augmentation to his family arms has been granted, to it we shall consequently adhere. Unfortunately, we have no means of ascertaining for what reason or at what time this orthography was changed. It is of but small moment in itself, though, to the antiquarian and the genealogist, it may appear of paramount importance.

That the change is of some antiquity, is evident by the following inscription upon a large grave-stone among the pavement in the nave of the church of New Shoreham. It is an epitaph to the memory of Sir Sidney's grandfather, and runs thus:—

" Here lieth
The Body of CORNELIUS SMITH,
Who served his King, Country, and Friend.
Faithful and honourable, he was an indulgent Husband,
A kind Father, and friendly to his Acquaintance:
Who died, much lamented, the 28th of October, 1727,
Aged 66 Years."

This Cornelius Smith was the father of Captain Edward Smith, of the Burford, who was mortally wounded at the attack of La Guira, Feb. 19th, 1743, and grandfather of General Edward Smith, colonel of the 43rd Regiment, and governor of Fort Charles, Jamaica. This gentleman served with the hero Wolfe at the reduction of Quebec, and died at Bath on the 19th of January 1809.

Sir Sidney Smith is a nephew of this General Smith, and a son of this general's younger brother. Sir Sidney's father served in the early part of the war of 1756, as aide-de-camp to the Right Honourable Lord George Sackville, and

afterwards held an office in the royal household. Sir Sidney's mother was a Miss Mary Wilkinson, daughter of Pinkney Wilkinson, Esq., a very opulent merchant.

From the riches of his maternal grandfather Sir Sidney Smith derived but little benefit, as his father having married in opposition to the wishes of Mr. Wilkinson, and for other reasons that will be afterwards alluded to, the vast property left by that gentleman was devised to his other daughter, Lady Camelford.

There seem to have been great causes of mutual dissatisfaction between Sir Sidney's father and maternal grandfather, as, the former having withdrawn his sons from the protection of the latter, the old gentleman, some little time previous to his death, cancelled a codicil to his will, by which, notwithstanding the little harmony that subsisted between him and his son-in-law, he had made some provision for his grandchildren.

By this daughter of Mr. Wilkinson the father of Sir William Sidney Smith had three sons and no daughter whatever. The eldest of these sons, now Colonel Charles Douglas Smith, is still living, enjoying his well-earned honours and great affluence, acquired by long and meritorious services in the East Indies. Colonel Smith first entered the army in a regiment raised by Lord

Suffield. This gentleman has a son in the Exchequer Office.

The second son, William Sidney Smith, who was born in Park Lane, Westminster, we believe towards the close of the year 1764, is the subject of these Memoirs.

John Spencer Smith, the third and youngest son, procured the appointment of page to Queen Charlotte, and so well recommended himself in that capacity, and so highly were his general talents appreciated, that he was sent on a mission of great importance to the court of Wurtemberg. He afterwards travelled to Constantinople, and it is confidently believed that he there converted to Christianity, and subsequently married, a Turkish lady of high rank and of great wealth. As will be seen in the course of these pages, he was ultimately of the greatest service to Sir Sidney Smith in all his operations in Egypt, and as our minister at the Ottoman court preserved and increased the good understanding that then subsisted between a government so fastidious and inconstant and ourselves. He is now in the enjoyment of a well-earned pension.

We have already briefly adverted to the loss to William Sidney and his brothers of their fair proportion of the grandfather's vast fortune. That this loss has been to them a blessing rather

than an injury, the success in life of them all, and the splendid career of one of them, most fully prove. It appears to us that Sir Sidney's father was treated rather harshly throughout the course of these unhappy disagreements. It is a most invidious task to attach anything approaching to censure on any of the progenitors of this distinguished family. We will hastily pass over these occurrences, as they do not appear to have greatly influenced the fortunes of Sir Sidney Smith. Let it be sufficient to mention, that the angry grandfather, owing to some representations made to him by his daughter, removed his three sons from under the care and fostering protection of the father, when they were receiving the first rudiments of their education under the celebrated Mr. Knox of Tunbridge, and caused them to be placed at a boarding-school in Bath, kept by a Mr. Morgan. That Mr. Wilkinson possessed the power thus cruelly to divide the sons from their father, arose out of the circumstances of his being able to withhold from his son-in-law a very great proportion of his not too abundant income. That he could do this neither justly nor legally, a verdict of an English jury subsequently determined:—that he did it with impunity, for some years, is certain.

When William Sidney Smith was between the

age of eleven and twelve, Captain Smith, no longer able to bear this unnatural separation, and his yearning to have them under his own care and protection, took away, clandestinely we believe, his three sons from the school at which they had been placed, to his house at Midgham. This commendable and parental act was visited upon him by an attempt to straiten him in his pecuniary resources. The indignant father appealed to the laws of his country, and his conduct was vindicated by obtaining the costs, and heavy damages against his persecutors.

We do not lay much stress upon the opinion that the future man may be indicated by the predilections of the infant; indeed, experience, would rather teach us another doctrine; but as many very sensible persons like to reduce everything to a system, we will, for their satisfaction, and for the amusement of others, relate a puerile anecdote that strongly displayed young Smith's predilection for aquatic exploits; indeed, that at that unjudging age he loved them better than praying—a very singular depravity, but which, we trust, will be forgiven to him in consideration of his extreme youth.

When William Sidney's father had abducted (for it was in reality an abduction) his children from their boarding-school at Bath, he removed

with them to his seat at Midgham in Berkshire. The mansion had been built by Captain Smith's father, and the extensive grounds surrounding it were laid out with great taste. Among the other accessories to the beauty of the place was a large piece of deep water, which immediately attracted the almost undivided attention of the embryo admiral—almost, we say, for even then he showed symptoms of that refined and graceful gallantry to the softer sex that has always marked his character. In fact, he divided his attention with a tolerable impartiality between a young lady of his own age, (eleven years,) this piece of water, and a large washing-tub.

It was the custom of Captain Smith to summon all his household to prayer every evening, and they were called together, in a kind of patriarchal fashion, by the sounding of a horn. One summer's evening the horn was blown the usual number of times; but to the customary blast no William Sidney appeared. The father grew alarmed, and, as his fears arose, so did the echoes of the horn upon the evening breeze. The young absentee heard the holy summons plainly enough, but he did not obey it, solely because he could not.

His non-appearance had caused great alarm, and the evening devotions were postponed in

order that the household might search for the lost and beloved son. He was at length found in a situation extremely nautical, but agreeable only to himself. He had embarked in the large washing-tub his youthful protegée, and taking a long pole, he had contrived, by its means, to place his circular ship, with himself and passenger, in the very centre of the large and deep water. We know very well, upon the best authority, which is that of the nursery, that, when seven wise men went to sea in a bowl, they made a very foolish expedition of it; we must not, therefore, greatly blame young Smith when we relate that by some inadvertence, probably a slight attention to the young lady, the companion of his dangers, he lost his pole.

Unfortunately, just as his alarmed father arrived, it fell calm, and the only motion the tub had was that unpleasant one of the pillory, going slowly round and round. There stood the future hero of many fights, with his arms folded in a manner that reminds one now of the prints of Napoleon on the Island of St. Helena.

Those on shore were totally at a loss how safely to bring the frail vessel with its precious charge on shore, for a very little shifting or tottering would have overturned it. None of the spectators could swim, and night was drawing on

apace, when, to add to the dismal nature of the scene, William Sidney's companion began to wail most bitterly. Indeed, the situation of the children became critical, if not dangerous. It fell, however, to the lot of him who had created, to unravel the difficulty. Having sufficiently enjoyed the glory of his situation, (he was always a little fond of display,) he hailed those on shore, and told them to fasten the string of his kite to a favourite dog that belonged to him. This being done, he called him to the tub, and thus conveyed a towing line on board the first craft that he had the honour of commanding.

When the tub was brought to the bank of the lake, so nicely fitted was the cargo to the tonnage of the tub, that the children were nearly drowned, because the one was attempted to be taken out a little before the other. The father and one of the servants at length snatched them both out simultaneously, and flung them on the grass. Captain Smith was so much affected that he could not, at first, speak.

"Now, father, we will go to prayers," said the young desperado.

"We had better," he replied, with feelings that a father only can appreciate.

Though this anecdote may be, by some, deemed puerile, we think that it strongly marks the

two principal traits of character that Sir Sidney displayed through the whole course of his life—a recklessness in running into danger, and great resources of mind in getting out of it with credit.

It was at Midgham that William Sidney formed some of his most useful and distinguished friendships; among others, the Duke of St. Albans, the Lords Rivers and Delaware, and Lord Rodney, who was a constant visiter, and with whom he first went to sea.

William Sidney Smith did not long remain under the paternal roof, and, during the small time that he enjoyed that advantage and happiness, he was deprived of the soothing attention of one who, on account of those differences so much to be deplored, with her family, was unfortunately living separate from her husband. She did not survive to witness the renown of her sprightly and favourite son, as she passed into a happier state of existence before he returned from his second trip to sea. She died and was interred at Bath.

Those who knew well Sir Sidney Smith in his boyhood, describe him as then being a most vivacious specimen of juvenility—quick, daring, and mercurial, and not far removed from a little Pickle. In his person, though of small size, he was eminently handsome, with clustering and

curling black hair, dark clear complexion, and with a high colour. At the earliest age he evinced an utter contempt of danger, and a decision of character, that, under proper training, warranted the most sanguine hopes of future excellence. Among his other qualities, an aptitude for invention, and a power of adaptation of his then limited capabilities, both in the prosecution of his studies and amusements, early displayed themselves. He was a boy for whom you might fear a little, whom you could not help loving much, and whom you must admire entirely.

CHAPTER II.

Sir Sidney's first entrance into the Navy—Some reflections on the early appointments of that period—His various juvenile services until he was made Post Captain.

We have now to introduce our young subject upon that arena that was afterwards to prove the scene of exploits that elevated the already-exalted naval fame of his country to a still loftier glory, and where he entwined the military with the naval laurel in the triumphal crown that he threw at the feet of England's Genius of Victory.

Long before his little feet had mimicked the officer-stride on the deck of a man-of-war, he had, in his infant imagination, commanded, fought, and conquered. His thoughts, his dreams, his short moments of seriousness, and his long hours of playfulness, were all devoted to fighting the French. He seemed to have been born with, and nurtured in, an antipathy to that nation,

with which fate had ordained that he should pass the greatest portion of his life, either as their battling enemy, their impatient prisoner, or their welcome guest. He appears, in his earliest youth, to have been a merry and graceful parody of one of the young Hannibals. The French—the French—he would annihilate them! His puerile antipathies ripened into a very disastrous though gallant and no longer prejudiced opposition to that nation, which he commenced by hating, and finished by beating and respecting.

His father being gentleman usher to Queen Charlotte, and enjoying much of her personal favour, the reader must not be surprised, considering how naval matters were managed at that period, to learn that little Smith strutted a midshipman on board of the Sandwich, under Lord Rodney, before he was twelve years of age.

It would be a difficult matter successfully to defend appointments of this description by argument—or rather, that which we might produce as arguments, would no longer be considered as such in these march-of-mind-boasted days. All that we can do, is to imitate that shrewd person, who, when a very learned philosopher was strenuously arguing that there could not, by possibility, be any such thing as motion, merely got up and walked across the room. To those who con-

demn these boyish appointments as contrary to justice and subversive of the service, we shall perhaps admit their reasonings to be unanswerable without being in the least convincing, and content ourselves with mentioning the glory of, in this respect, the unreformed navy, and pointing to such names as those of Duncan, Jervis, Nelson, and, last though not least among them, Sir Sidney Smith, who all entered the service about the same age.

Improper, perhaps, as at heart we acknowledge these appointments to be, we must now introduce him, stiff in his uniforms, with his shrill treble pipe imitating the hoarse tones of command, and shaking off the schoolboy a little before he could gracefully creep into the seemliness and importance of the officer and the man. However, he showed an astonishing precocity in his metamorphosis; and, long before other lads had divested themselves of the fear and the tyranny of the ferula and the rod, he had already become respectable as a friend, and something to be dreaded as an enemy among men.

From reports to which we can safely give credit, we find that he was universally beloved on board the Sandwich, and almost immediately drew upon himself the favourable notice of his superior officers.

In the very subordinate capacity of a midshipman—and he was a very young midshipman in his first ship—it cannot be expected that he could perform any feat worthy of record. In this situation he had to learn the first and the most distasteful duty—to obey. Comparatively speaking, his post was a private, and certainly an obscure one, and hardly any naval combination of circumstances, however stirring they might have been, could then have put him prominently forward.

From the Sandwich he passed into the Greyhound in the same rank, gaining thus experience in two very different classes of vessels. During the period of his service in this latter ship, nothing occurred to him that demands a place in this biography.

Immediately that he had served the time allotted by the rules of the navy, he obtained his commission as lieutenant on the 22nd of May, 1781, and was, what is technically called, "made" into the Alcide 74, at that time commanded by Captain C. Thompson.

In this last-mentioned line-of-battle ship he shared in the action of Admiral Graves off the Chesapeake; and though no opportunity was offered to him in that affair eminently to distinguish himself in the limited sphere in which he

was compelled to act, he did that which English seamen have ever done—his duty.

Those conversant with the naval history of the country, must well remember the many indecisive skirmishes that took place between Lord Howe and the Count de Grasse, in the seas near the island of St. Christopher's, in the West Indies. At this period, the weather-gage was considered almost as a gage of victory, and hostile fleets would consume days in endeavouring to gain it. The French count took advantage of this prejudice; and when the English admiral bore down upon the French fleet, the line of the latter would discharge its raking broadside, bear up, and run to leeward, and again forming the line, have recourse to the same tactics. By means of this slippery manœuvre, this particular action consisted of nothing but numerous and indecisive skirmishes. It gave Sir Sidney a lesson that he remembered in his after life, and it was one by which English commanders profited in succeeding encounters.

It does not fall within the scope of our undertaking to record the victories of the naval chiefs under whom our officer had the good fortune to act in a subordinate capacity. We have merely to mention them to show that the extent of his services justified his very rapid promotion, notwithstanding his very early youth.

He participated in the gallant Sir George B. Rodney's glorious victory of the 1st of April, 1782, and, immediately subsequent to this splendid event, he obtained his commission, bearing date 2nd of May, 1782, as commander, and was appointed to the Fury sloop of war, having served as a lieutenant less than one year.

In the next year, 1783, he was made post captain, an exceedingly rapid, and a not strictly regular, promotion—a rapidity of advancement that can only be accounted for by his father's interest at court, and justified by Sir Sidney's great merit. He was a post captain at the juvenile age of nineteen, having served as a commander only one year and five days.

With this promotion he obtained the command of the Alcmene, a small class frigate of twenty-eight guns; and as a short and deceitful though a profound peace had appeared to have hushed up the angry feelings of the European powers, he returned to England, and on his arrival his ship was immediately paid off.

Now, with the certainty of life, was the certainty of the highest honours of his noble profession assured to him. Without meaning the imbecility of a pun, before he had reached his majority as a civilian, as a naval officer he ranked with a full colonel in the army. The minor man

was a full post. He had passed, when in the eye of the law he was only considered as an infant, as a warrior entitled to the command of hundreds of men, those difficult, and too often impassable portals which open to that path, which requires only time to guide the fortunate traveller to the high station of admiral of the red. Truly may it be said of Sir Sidney, that he possessed, in an eminent degree, that (by the Romans) much venerated attribute in a commander, good luck; and it was happy for his country, and glorious to our hero, that he possessed merits equal only to his brilliancy of accident.

On his return to England he found his worthy parent residing at Carrington-street, May Fair; and though, as yet, he had not graven his name deeply on the tablets of fame, he had signalised himself sufficiently to make all connected with him proud to own him as an acquaintance, friend, or relation. His father, at this period, seemed to exist but for his favourite son; every indulgence was his that he could bestow, and much more excellent advice was at his son's service than he chose to receive. It must be confessed that at this time he fell in with the gaieties of his station, and the opportunities that were offered him in the best metropolitan society, but in a manner neither vicious nor outrageous. With the excep-

tion of some few passages of love, with which our biography has nothing to do, he might be pronounced at this period of his life a rather staid young man.

CHAPTER III.

Sir Sidney enters the Swedish service—The Battle of the Galleys—The Battle of the 9th and 10th of June—Anecdote of Captain Dennison—Some reflections on British officers serving foreign powers.

WITH increasing ardour for a profession in which he had already given so great a promise of future excellence, and impatient of a life of inactivity, our officer, in 1788, upon a prospect of a rupture between Sweden and Russia, with a generous sympathy for the party which appeared to be the weaker, entered into the naval service of the former.

His distinguished bravery and very superior naval science drew upon him the general attention, and purchased for him the gratitude of the Swedish nation. It was a severe service in stormy regions, and an inclement climate. Captain Smith had first to discipline before he fought his crews. In the several severe encounters

which proved the more bloody and disastrous in wreck, on account of the ignorance of the belligerents, the fleets of the Empress Catherine had bitterly to deplore the assistance that was brought to their opponents in the person of our officer.

The digression can hardly be thought to be unwarrantable, when it gives an abstract of some of the encounters between the naval armament of these rival northern powers. It was in those that Captain Sidney Smith saw some most severe service, and gained great knowledge and experience in the desperate school of actual fight. We will select from among these transactions a short account of the battle of the Galleys, which may not be unacceptable to the admirers of our hero's character.

Just as the stormy April of 1790 was terminating, the grand fleet of Sweden — for Sweden then had a grand fleet, and was a considerable naval power—under the command of the Duke of Sudermania, consisting of twenty-three ships of the line and eighteen frigates, sailed from Carlscrona, in the province of Smaland.

This expedition was well planned. Its pretended object was that of preventing the junction of two divisions of the Russian fleet, one of which was then riding at anchor in the port of Revel, the other in the port of Cronstadt. The real

views, however, were much more extensive, being to attack in detail, by first capturing the port of Revel, and destroying the fleet there, when the other division, it was confidently believed, would fall an easy sacrifice.

This design was bravely attempted, but it was not attended with that success that might have been hoped from the strength of the armament, the bravery of the seamen, and the skill and intrepidity of the native and foreign officers employed. The result of the attack brought no tarnish to the glory of those who conducted it.

In most maritime expeditions, and more especially those which are destined to act against fortresses and batteries on shore, the elements may prove the most potential allies, or the most formidable enemies. The truth of this was fully exemplified in this attack upon Revel and the Russian fleet. This fleet, then lying at anchor, consisted of eleven sail of the line, three of which were three-decked ships, and four large frigates. Independently of their own guns, this powerful fleet was defended in a very advantageous manner by numerous batteries in the harbour, and by the fortifications about the town, all of which were mounted with heavy cannon.

The Swedes approached boldly, receiving and returning a tremendous fire. Under all these

disadvantages, which became the more apparent as they were the more closely encountered, the Duke continued this desperate attack with unabating intrepidity, and when he was, to all appearance, on the very threshold of success, the wind suddenly changed, and so violent a storm ensued, that his vessels were obliged to close their lower-deck ports, thus rendering the tiers of his heaviest metal useless, and reducing his attacking power by one half.

The adverse hurricane also prevented many of his ships from taking any share in the action whatever, so that, after proving courage, conduct, and good seamanship, he was obliged to return with his fleet, at the moment when the enemy appeared all but defeated.

This was not the extent of his disasters. The wind setting dead in upon the shore, the fury of the elements drove the Prince Charles, of sixty guns, after being dismasted, into the hands of the Russians. The Ricket Stander, of the same force, was wrecked, abandoned, and set fire to by orders of the Duke; and the Valeur, another line-of-battle ship, was drifted on shore, but was afterwards enabled to escape, and get to sea again, by throwing overboard a part of her guns.

Amidst all these misfortunes, it was soon discovered that English officers were on board, and

Captain Sidney Smith in personal command in this discomfited fleet, by the rapidity with which its damages were repaired. On the very next day, such were the zeal and diligence of the Duke of Sudermania, and the commanders under his direction, that the fleet was again under sail a league and a half from Norglon, and so completely repaired from its recent damages, that it waited with impatience to make a second attack.

On the 3rd and 4th of June, 1790, two more desperate battles were fought in the Gulf of Wilbourg, in which the party that our hero espoused was again defeated; the Swedes losing seven ships, three frigates, six galleys, and about sixty armed small craft. The Russians also suffered severely. The slaughter, as might reasonably be expected, was particularly fatal to the English officers in the Russian service. In these affairs the point of the utmost danger was the point of honour. Captains Dawson and Trevenor were slain, and Captain Marshall also lost his life on the same occasion. Being mortally wounded, he had the agony, in the bitterness of the hour of death, to see the ship that he had commanded, and the crew that he had disciplined, sink with him, his colours still flying in melancholy defiance. Captains Aikin and Miller were also grievously wounded.

We must premise, that an unsuccessful attempt had been made by the King of Sweden, who commanded in person, to destroy the Russian squadron in Viborg. The approach of the Prince of Nassau, with the Cronstadt division, had already made the position of the Swedes at the entrance of Viborg Bay extremely critical, the more especially as their scarcity of ammunition, and their want of provisions, made their return to their own ports a measure of first necessity.

In this situation of affairs, the king resolved to avail himself of a strong easterly wind, which set in on the 3rd of June, to gain Swerksund and Sweaborg. It was necessary for the fleet to penetrate through a narrow pass, and, in so doing, to sustain the fire of four Russian ships of the line, two of which were placed on each side of the strait; and, after this, to engage the whole of Admiral Tschitcshakoff's line, which, at a small distance, was drawn up along the coast, while his frigates were ranged and judiciously placed among the islands which lie nearer the shore.

Unappalled by this display of superior force, the Swedish van, led on by Admiral Modée, passed the Narrows without suffering any material loss, firing with great spirit both broadsides at the same time against the enemy on

either side, The cannonade from the four Russian line-of-battle ships was, however, so powerful, and so well supported, that it was resolved by the Duke of Sudermania to attempt their destruction by fireships; but this operation proved so unsuccessful, that they were driven back upon two of his own fleet, a ship of the line and a frigate, both of which were blown up.

The Swedish admiral, instead of having recourse to so uncertain an experiment as fireships, should have placed a vessel of equal force alongside each of these Russian vessels, and having thus masked their fire, the smaller vessels could have passed up the centre of the strait in absolute safety, and then the protecting ships could have followed, forming an excellent protective rear-guard. The unfair means of war by fire-vessels was then much in vogue, but now we are happy to say that among civilised nations their employment is generally condemned, and their utility disallowed.

The Swedes being confused in a considerable degree, by this peculiarly distressful accident, the ships that were to follow were unable to proceed with the requisite order and circumspection; four of them struck upon the rocks, and were thus left at the mercy of the enemy.

During the further course, along the coast, of this

bewildered navy, already so diminished in force, three more vessels of the line surrendered to the Russian flag. This engagement, so ill fought as to nautical manœuvring, yet so well contested as to personal bravery, continued all night and a part of the next day, and it was not until the evening that the duke, with the shattered remains of his fleet, found safety in the port of Sweaborg, leaving three line-of-battle ships and one frigate in the hands of the Russians, the same number of line-of-battle ships and one frigate stranded on the Russian shores, and witnessing the destruction of another ship of the line and another frigate by fire, besides losing a schooner and a cutter, supposed to have been sunk.

The small craft taken or sunk were supposed to amount to sixty, and with the galleys eight hundred men of the Swedes were captured. The whole loss of the Swedes in this affair was above seven thousand men. To add to these disasters, all the baggage of the fleet, amounting in value to several millions of dollars, fell into the hands of the Russians.

In this protracted encounter, our young officer, whilst he shared in the danger, must have gained an admirable lesson in naval warfare. Every possible variety of circumstance must have been

presented to him, and from the alternate success and discomfiture of the belligerents he must have acquired a deep insight into all the strategy of maritime war. The lesson was deeply traced and largely written in blood, and after-exploits proved that it had not been studied in vain.

Captain Sidney Smith had at that period but little respite: he was soon to witness a repetition of the same scene, but with happier results to the cause in which he had engaged.

Though the events of the actions of the 3rd and 4th of June were thus unfortunate to the Swedes, his Majesty was in a short time able to reappear at sea in so effective a condition as not only again to contend for victory, but also to obtain ample compensation for his former losses.

Having supplied his armament with provisions and ammunition, and being joined by the division under Lieutenant-Colonel Cronstadt, which had not been able to reach the Bay of Viborg, so as to participate in the late engagement, the king sailed immediately, with a view to prevent the Prince of Russia, who was advancing with the Russian Cronstadt and Viborg squadrons, from getting into the port of Frederickham. This he was so fortunate as to accomplish.

In consequence of this proceeding, an action

took place on the 9th of July, in which the king commanded in person nominally—Sidney Smith actually, who was at the royal elbow during the whole of the engagement. It began at half-past nine in the morning, and lasted twenty-four hours.

On the preceding day, several vessels of the Russian in-shore squadron were discovered at Aspo; on which the king, attended by M. de Armstadt, went to reconnoitre. On the 9th, the Prince of Nassau advanced towards the Swedish shore, and the signal was made for the Swedish fleet to arrange itself in order of battle. By nine in the morning, the enemy had formed his line, and made sail towards Cape Musalo. The right wing of the Swedes advanced to meet them, and the firing commenced briskly on both sides.

Immediately after, the king, on board the Seraphim galley, made the signal for a general attack. The enemy still approached with a spirited fire, which was so warmly returned by both the Swedish wings, that at noon the left of the enemy began to give way. Both the right and left of the Swedes being reinforced by several divisions which had been previously placed in the Sound, they were enabled to continue the action with increased vigour. At the same time, the Russian line having received some reinforcements, the eastward wing again advanced and returned to the conflict.

But their renewed endeavours were in vain. About four o'clock in the afternoon some of their larger galleys were beaten from the land, and struck their colours. Of those, several afterwards foundered, and several were taken possession of by the Swedes.

Gustavus was not absolutely without loss himself. One of his best galleys, the Udema, caught fire about six o'clock and sank; but happily the whole of her crew was saved. The same fate befel one of the Russian xebecs, and after this the smaller vessels began to sheer off.

Many of the enemy's heavy galleys continued firing till the evening, and then made sail with a view of effecting their escape. Some ran on the shoals and struck their flags. At eleven, darkness compelled a cessation of hostilities. The conquered vessels were taken possession of, and the prisoners removed.

As early as three next morning the cannonade was renewed, and shortly after, one of the Russian frigates surrendered, and several of the smaller craft were taken. The enemy then commenced retreating in every direction, and to set fire to their stranded ships. They were pursued till ten at night, and forty-five captured. Out of the Russian vessels that were sunk, one officer and one surgeon only were saved. Six of the

stranded vessels were burned by the Swedes. The victors computed the number of their prisoners at four thousand five hundred, including two hundred and ten officers.

Thus, in this action, after having for so long a period trembled upon an equality, whilst thousands on both sides were passing to judgment, the scales of victory inclined towards Gustavus. The Russians, in their turn, suffered a defeat, with the loss of five frigates, fifteen galleys, two floating batteries, with twenty other vessels, and, a great quantity of naval and military stores; and, as before mentioned, four thousand five hundred prisoners were also captured.

On this memorable occasion, an English officer of the name of Dennison commanded the Russian frigate Venus, and, by his presence of mind and gallantry, very nearly effected the capture of the King of Sweden's sacred person, as he gained possession of the galley in which that monarch had embarked.

Captain Smith, who was with the sovereign, observing the gallant and seaman-like style in which the Venus was bearing down upon the galley, became assured that she must be under the command of an Englishman, and suggested to the king that it was high time for them to look out for their mutual safety; an advice not at

all to be disregarded under the pressing nature of the contingency. The king, being fully conscious of his imminent danger, shuffling off his royal dignity for the nonce, like a very prudent and private individual, conveyed himself and his adviser into a small boat that was lying alongside, and pulled off to another and a safer vessel.

The non-nautical reader may suppose, that, in this instance, the future hero of Acre showed abundantly that better part of valour named "discretion." So he did; and without at all impugning his valour in the abstract, it must be understood that the galley was nothing more than a sort of great row-boat, as little able to contend, vessel to vessel, with a frigate, as a minnow with a pike. The gallantry and seamanlike conduct of Dennison were not displayed in the taking of this galley, but in his making his way to her, by breaking through the greatly superior obstructing force.

This noble fellow was killed on the same day.

Let us pause, for a moment, in the course of our narrative, and attempt an apology for Sir Sidney Smith, and those of his brave countrymen who degraded themselves to mercenaries in a quarrel, on opposite sides, in which they could have had no patriotic, and hardly a public interest. Humanity

requires one, and the enlightenment of the present day will let nothing pass as a justification that will not bear the test of a sound morality.

If biography be something only to extol that which is commendable, and to gloze over faults, and palliate that which is discreditable, it is a species of writing that cannot too soon become extinct. That, lately, memoirs have partaken of this nature, is lamentably true. When written in this manner, they become to the rising generation false guides and lying finger-posts. They are painted all white, on which dark letters of instruction are nowhere to be seen.

We have just described Englishman opposed to Englishman, fellow-subject to fellow-subject; and in this almost suicidal contest we see the country deprived of some of its most gallant defenders, the king of some of the best supporters of his crown, families of their fathers, and the ornaments and the nourishers of social circles ruthlessly destroyed. The picture is true, and, the more nearly examined, as it is true so is it revolting.

For acts like these, the fervour of youth cannot be pleaded ;—youth, far more prone to act than to reflect, yet, in numerous cases, as well as age, must deliberate. The drawing the sword for

a foreign potentate, even in the youngest, must be an act of deliberate calculation. The responsibility, therefore, must remain upon the mercenary's conscience.

In the case before us, neither party of the English belligerents could have been influenced to shed the blood of each other on the score of philanthropy, or in advocacy of the cause of the human race. Liberty was not then fully appreciated anywhere, and nowhere so little as among the people of the two nations that were opposed to each other.

We will not suppose, for a moment, that these gentlemen embarked in this quarrel, on different sides, for their private emolument. Hired gladiatorship, however highly it may have been estimated on the continent, has never yet been the naturalised occupation of the English. It would therefore appear that, the more we examine this question, the greater, we find, are the difficulties that surround it, and the more specious are the fallacies by which a justification must be attempted. In fact there is no justification, in the broad and general point of view, for either party of the English officers that were thus unnaturally opposed to each other. On this point we insist, for the sake of religion, for the sake of humanity,

for the sake of patriotism. We speak thus decidedly, in order that our feeble voice may impress upon the youth of the present and of the future day, that it is a crime against God and against man to draw the sword of the slayer in any other save their country's cause.

As to the apology of our hero at finding him in the predicament that we have thus strongly condemned, the one that we are going to produce will be thought weak upon the general merits, but powerful as applicable to Sir Sidney's individual case. Let the reader always remember that we offer an apology, not a defence. This apology consists in his thirst for distinction, in his passionate love of glory, merging in and displaying themselves in an unquenchable zeal for the honour of his country. It was this that led him into the error, not an error of the heart but of calculation—an error to which people of chivalrous characters are peculiarly liable.

Sir Sidney Smith continued to serve the King of Sweden with great advantage to that prince, and reputation to himself, until the peace of Riechenback, and, for his eminent services, was rewarded with the grand cross of the order of the Sword.

That his splendid, yet we think misplaced ser-

vices, were not regarded with the stern view of the moralist by our own government of that period, is evident, by his own sovereign conferring upon him the additional honour of an English knighthood, at St. James's.

CHAPTER IV.

Enters the Turkish service—Fits out a man-of-war at his own risk—Gets a reinforcement of seamen at Smyrna—Joins Lord Hood at Toulon—Some account of the transactions at that place.

IMPATIENT of the inactivity of peace, and despising the blandishments and dissipation of fashionable society, his mind could find sustenance and satisfaction only in the bustle and excitement of actual service. We find him, therefore, in 1793, serving as a volunteer in the Turkish marine, and, when thus employed, he happened to be at Smyrna when the war broke out with France. This intelligence was to him like the sound of the trumpet to the war-horse. Whether he had received the usual notice from the Admiralty, issued on similar occasions, we know not—to Sir Sidney it would have been of little moment. Nothing now occupied his thoughts but the best and most advantageous method of repairing to his post

among the defenders of his country. His thirst now for the "pomp and circumstance of war" was a virtue.

In this emergency, his mind always teeming with resources, he determined to repair to England with some advantage to his country. He came not single-handed. At this time there were several valuable seamen out of employ at Smyrna. He was resolved that they should not be lost to his sovereign. Accordingly, at his own risk, he purchased one of the latteen-rigged, fast-sailing craft of the Archipelago, and with equal humanity and patriotism manned it with these men, who would otherwise have been, at this critical juncture, lost to the service.

Without the protection of a letter of marque, he shipped himself, with about forty truculent fellows, in this diminutive man-of-war, and hoisting the English flag and pennant, he named it the Swallow Tender, and sailed down the Mediterranean in search of the English fleet, which he found at Toulon, a short time before the evacuation of that sea-port, and the destruction of its magazines, dockyard, and arsenals.

It was at this memorable epoch, and on this fatal spot, that Bonaparte first signalised himself. Many and sufficiently accurate are the accounts extant of the siege of this strongly fortified

place by the French, when it was temporarly held by the combined British and Spanish forces, for the partisans of the Bourbons. It is not our office to enter fully into the operations, or to give a minute detail of the events that led to the calamitous results; but we must give some account of them, the better to understand the position in which Lord Howe found himself, and the English and allied forces co-operating with him. Oppressed, irritated, and almost driven to despair by the multiplied and still multiplying atrocities of the democrats who were then devastating France under the direction of the ferocious Robespierre, the southern sections of that distracted kingdom openly displayed a monarchical feeling. They ardently longed for the peaceful and mild tyranny of the Bourbons.

On the 23rd of August, 1793, commissioners representing the sections of the department of the Rhone went on board the Victory, the flag-ship of Lord Howe, then lying off Marseilles, expecting to meet commissioners from Toulon, deputed by the sections of the department of Var, for the same purpose—that of recalling Louis XVIII., and re-establishing a monarchical government.

With this view, on the 26th of August, the deputies of all the sections agreed to proposals made by Lord Howe, and signed a declaration

which consisted of eighteen articles, investing him, at the same time, personally with the command of the harbour, the forts, and the fleet at Toulon. Lord Howe, having received assurances of the good disposition of the principal part of the officers and seamen of the French ships, resolved to land fifteen hundred men, and take possession of the forts which commanded the ships in the road.

Acting up to this intention, notwithstanding a display of opposition by their Admiral St. Julian, a stanch republican and withal a most turbulent spirit, the honourable Captain Elphinstone, afterwards Lord Keith, at midday on the 28th of August, took possession of the fort of La Malgue.

In pursuance of Lord Hood's directions, he took the command as governor, and sent a flag of truce, with a preparatory notice to St. Julian, that such French ships as did not proceed without delay into the inner harbour, and put their powder on shore, would be treated as enemies. St. Julian, however, was found to have escaped during the night, with the greater part of the crews of seven line-of-battle ships, which were principally attached to him; all but these seven ships removed into the inner harbour in the course of the evening.

The Spanish fleet, under the command of Don Juan de Langaras, appeared in sight as the

British troops were in the act of landing to take possession of Fort la Malgue.

Having thus made himself master of Toulon and the adjacent forts, Lord Hood issued, on the same evening, another proclamation which greatly soothed the minds of the inhabitants. The English troops received, on the 29th of August, a reinforcement of one thousand men, who were disembarked from the Spanish fleet on the same day the British fleet worked into the outer roads of Toulon, followed by the Spanish, and anchored at noon without the smallest obstruction.

The junction of two such powerful fleets, that had often met in fierce contention, but which now rode peacefully in one of the finest harbours in the world, formed a singular and cheerful sight, inspiriting to the loyal inhabitants, and proving to the republicans that they owed their late supremacy more to terror than to affection.

On the 30th of August, Lord Hood judged it expedient, for the more effectual preservation of good order and discipline in the town, to appoint Rear-Admiral Goodall governor of Toulon and its dependencies. This was the more necessary, as a detachment of the republican army, commanded by Casteaux, consisting of seven hundred and fifty men, with some cavalry and ten pieces of cannon, approached the village of Ollioulle, near Toulon.

On this being ascertained, Captain Elphinstone immediately marched out of Fort Malgue at the head of six hundred troops, English and Spanish, and attacking the enemy with great spirit, soon made them abandon their posts, took four of their pieces of cannon with their equipments, many horses, and much ammunition.

Our loss was immaterial. In this attack Captain Elphinstone displayed a knowledge of military tactics which was hardly expected from an officer in the British navy.

On the 6th of September Lord Mulgrave arrived at Toulon, and, at the request of Lord Hood, accepted the command of the British troops, with the rank of brigadier-general, until his Majesty's pleasure should be known. In consequence of the report made by his lordship of the forces that would be requisite to defend the several ports in the vicinity of Toulon, Lord Hood despatched a pressing letter to Sir Robert Boyd, the governor of Gibraltar, requesting fifteen hundred soldiers, with a number of artillery-men, and an able engineer.

By the middle of September our post began to be kept in a constant state of alarm by the continually increasing numbers of Casteaux's army on the west, and that of Italy on the east; each of them consisting of nearly six thousand men. At

the same time, Lord Hood had apprehensions that some desperate attempt would be made from within the town by upwards of five thousand disaffected seamen. The committee-general of the sections, and the French royalist Rear-Admiral Trogroffe, represented that to get rid of them was absolutely necessary to the safety of the loyalists. This was the more especially evident, as, previously to Lord Hood taking possession of Toulon, they had agreed that those men should be sent home, provided that they did not take any active part in obstructing the operations of the British fleets. These conditions not yet having been fulfilled, they, in consequence, began to be very clamorous and unruly. All these causes pressing upon the mind of Lord Hood, he judged it expedient to embark them in four of the most unserviceable of the French ships, Le Patriote, L'Apollon, L'Orion, and L'Entreprenant, to each of which a passport was given.

These ships were dismantled of their guns, excepting two on the forecastles of each, to be used as signals in case of distress. They had no small arms, and only twenty ordnance cartridges on board of each ship. They sailed under flags of truce; two for Brest, one for Rochefort, and one for L'Orient.

In addition to the motives just related, which

induced Lord Hood thus to act, and strictly adhere to the convention previously formed with the civil and military government of Toulon, there were also others that had a powerful influence on his conduct. Amidst this mass of five thousand seamen, who were reported turbulent and disaffected, many were devoted to the cause of the inhabitants of Toulon, and were ready to make every exertion in favour of monarchy; therefore, as it was confidently rumoured that Brest, Rochefort, and the other seaports of France, would take an active part in the same cause, there was good reason to hope that the arrival of these seamen would accelerate, at the several ports, similar exertions in behalf of Louis XVIII.

His Majesty's ships Leviathan and Bedford arrived at Toulon, on the 28th of September, with eight hundred Sardinian troops, and also Marshal Forteguerri, commodore of the Sicilian squadron, with two thousand troops from Naples. This served considerably to cheer the spirits of the garrison, as well as of the Toulonnese, as, for the last fortnight, scarcely a day had passed without an attack upon the town from one quarter or another. Casteaux's army now amounted to eight thousand men on the west, and that on the east, under Le Poype, to seven thousand, with reinforcements continually pouring into both.

The enemy had also opened a battery of twenty twenty-four-pounders upon our gunboats, and the ships that covered them; and though they were soon dismouted by the vessels under Rear-Admiral Gell, and the works totally destroyed with very great slaughter, yet the enemy renewed them three successive times, and, to the last moment, persevered in their attacks upon our gunboats and advanced ships.

During the night of the 21st of September, the French, availing themselves of a fog, very unexpectedly surprised a post occupied by the Spaniards, and thus got possession of the height of Pharon, immediately over Toulon; but at noon, on the 1st of October, when in the very act of establishing themselves with about two thousand men, they were attacked by the troops under Lord Mulgrave, and, after a short but spirited action, driven from the height with great slaughter. Many of the flying parties were forced headlong, at the point of the bayonet, over the rocks.

The loss of the allied forces amounted to only seven killed and seventy-two wounded, whilst the French had one thousand four hundred and fifty put *hors de combat*, and forty-one taken prisoners.

The batteries of the French on the Hautier de Ranier were also destroyed in the night of the 8th of October, with a considerable quantity of artillery and ammunition. The ensuing night, Captain Smith, assisted by Lieutenant Scrofield, of the royal navy, and the seamen under their command, made a successful sortie on some batteries recently erected by the enemy, which they completely destroyed. The French, notwithstanding these defeats, obtained possession of Cape le Brun on the 11th, but were again overcome and driven from thence with considerable loss.

Major-General O'Hara and Major-General Dundas arrived on the 22d of October,—the former with a commission to be governor of Toulon, with its dependencies. Lord Hood had the mortification to find, at this critical juncture, that Sir Robert Boyd was so sparing of succours for the defence of Toulon, that he had sent from Gibraltar only half the force which had been earnestly requested early in September.

Lord Hood, perceiving his fleet much weakened by the number of the seamen who were sent on shore to defend the forts, found it expedient to despatch a ship to the Grand Master of Malta, requesting that one thousand five hundred Maltese seamen might be sent to serve in the British

fleet during its continuance in the Mediterranean, who should have the same rations, treatment, and the same monthly wages, as the British. The Grand Master, in the most handsome manner, furnished the desired reinforcement.

CHAPTER V.

Some account of the situation of the British and Allied forces holding Toulon—The attacks of the French—Misconduct of the Allies—General O'Hara made prisoner—Bonaparte's account of the transaction—It is resolved to evacuate Toulon.

On the evening of the 11th of November, the French, with a large force, vigorously attacked our post upon the heights de Grasse, called Fort Mulgrave, and one of the most essential positions that covered the shipping in the harbour of Toulon. The attack was principally directed on that part of the place which was occupied by the Spaniards on the right. General O'Hara, who was dining on board the Victory, hastened on shore. When he reached the height, he found that the French were close to the works, and the Spaniards in full retreat, firing their muskets in the air. The general instantly directed a company of Royals to advance, who immediately leaped upon the works

and put the enemy to flight, after leaving six hundred men dead and wounded upon the field. The loss of the English amounted to sixty-one only.

The British admiral, in addition to what he had already experienced since his taking possession of Toulon, had to undergo a fresh vexation at the end of November, and one, too, of the most serious and alarming nature, considering the augmented force of the surrounding enemy, and the critical situation of the posts to be defended. After having been flattered with the most positive hopes of receiving, towards the middle of this month, five thousand Austrian troops, and when he had actually despatched Vice-Admiral Cosby with a squadron of ships and transports to Vado Bay to convey them, as previously concerted between Mr. Trevor, his Majesty's minister at Tunis, and himself, by letters received from Mr. Trevor on the 18th of November, his lordship's hopes were at once destroyed, and with them all expectation of the arrival of a single Austrian soldier at Toulon.

The enemy, at the close of November, having opened a battery against the fort of Malbosquet near the arsenal, and from which battery shot and shells could reach the town, it was resolved to destroy it, and to bring off the enemy's guns.

For this purpose, General O'Hara digested a distinct and masterly plan of attack, which he communicated, on the evening of the 29th of November, to the commanding officers of the troops of each nation. Accordingly, on the morning of the 30th, this plan was so far executed as to surprise the enemy's redoubt most effectually. The British troops having obtained full possession of the height and battery, their ardour and impetuosity were not to be restrained in this moment of success; but continuing to pursue the flying enemy, in a scattered manner, a full mile beyond the works, the consequence was, that the latter, collecting in great force, in their turn obliged our troops to retreat, and to relinquish the advantages they had at first obtained.

General O'Hara arrived at the battery at the moment it was retaken, and, perceiving the disorder of the troops thus driven back, was hastening to rally them, when, most unfortunately, he received a wound in the arm, which bled so much as to render him incapable of avoiding the enemy, by whom he was made prisoner as he sat down under the shelter of a wall.

Let us see the account that, in his own words, Bonaparte gave of this transaction. " I made General O'Hara prisoner, I may say, with my

own hand. I had constructed a masked battery of eight twenty-four-pounders and four mortars, in order to open upon the Fort Malbosquet, which was in possession of the English. It was finished in the evening, and it was my intention to have opened upon the English in the morning. While I was giving directions to another part of the army, some of the deputies from the Convention came down. In those days they sometimes took upon themselves to direct the operations of the armies, and those imbeciles ordered the batteries to commence, which order was obeyed.

"As soon as I saw this premature fire, I immediately conceived that the English general would attack this battery, and most probably carry it, as another had not yet been arranged to support it. In fact, O'Hara, seeing the shot from that battery would dislodge his troops from Malbosquet, from which last I would have taken the fort that commanded the harbour, determined upon attacking it. Accordingly, early in the morning, he put himself at the head of his troops, and actually carried the battery and the lines which I had formed—(Napoleon here drew upon a piece of paper a plan of the situation of the batteries)—to the left, and those to the right were taken by the Neapolitans. While O'Hara was busy in spiking the guns, I advanced with

three or four hundred grenadiers, unperceived, through a bog, and covered with olive trees, which communicated with the batteries, and commenced a terrible fire upon his troops. The English, astonished, at first supposed that the Neapolitans, who had the lines upon the right, had mistaken them for French, and said it is those *canaglie* of Neapolitans who are firing upon us; for even, at that time, your troops despised the Neapolitans. O'Hara ran out of the battery and advanced towards us. In advancing, he was wounded in the arm by the fire of a sergeant; and I, who stood at the mouth of the *boyau*, seized him by the coat, and drew him back among my own men, thinking he was a colonel, as he had two epaulets on.

"While they were taking him to the rear, he cried out that he was commander-in-chief of the English. He thought that they were going to massacre him, as there existed a horrible order at that time from the Convention, that no quarter was to be given to the English. I ran up, and prevented the soldiers from ill-treating him. He spoke very bad French, and as I saw he imagined that they intended to butcher him, I did everything in my power to console him, and gave directions that his wound should be immediately dressed, and that

every attention should be paid to him. He afterwards begged that I would give him a statement of how he had been taken, in order that he might forward it to his government in his justification."

Though we are not among those who give more implicit credence to all the conversational statements of Bonaparte than we do to his state documents, we believe his version of the transaction to be the right one. The previous description of this misfortune is compiled from the documents furnished to our government. We do not think them rigidly, though they may be essentially, correct. For the glory of the English army, we would rather place Bonaparte's account upon the records of our history. We will not suppose that the English troops were so undisciplined as to pursue a flying enemy in a disorderly manner for more than a mile, not only without orders, but against the will of their officers. It is very *ad captandum* to the misjudging public to represent the French flying before the English, even though it ended in the discomfiture of the latter. Still less can we credit that the commander-in-chief would join in so wild a sally, and upon so trifling an occasion. The real facts were, that the English had

surprised their enemies, and were, in their turn, themselves surprised.

We dwell thus long upon these affairs, firstly, because Sir Sidney certainly bore in them the most conspicuous, and performed the most useful part. Without his exertions, it will be immediately seen, that from this fierce contest we should not have plucked a single laurel wherewith to console us for our defeat; and secondly, we wish to place the odium of this cruel, momentous, and disastrous defeat, upon those who were, undoubtedly, its cause.

At this time the French army before Toulon amounted to forty thousand men, and after the surrender of Lyons, considerable as it already was, it became augmented daily. The army of the coalesced powers never exceeded twelve thousand, and even these were composed of five different nations, speaking five different languages; consequently not well formed to co-operate the one with the other. Of the actual British, there were never more than two thousand three hundred and sixty. The circumference necessary to be occupied for the complete defence of the town extended fifteen miles, with eight principal posts, and several immediate dependencies. It will naturally excite astonishment

that the place could be held for so long a time as seven weeks,

Early on the 17th of December, Fort Mulgrave, on the height La Grasse, was stormed by an immense body of the enemy, after having kept up an incessant fire upon it, with shot and shells, for four-and-twenty hours. As usual, the right, occupied by the Spaniards, soon gave way, by which means the French entered the works, and got entire possession of the height. At the same time they attacked and carried the heights of Pharon, immediately over Toulon.

Things were now growing to a crisis. A council of war, that sure herald of discomfiture, was summoned, and it was determined to evacuate a place that could be no longer held.

The Spanish admiral, Langara, undertook to destroy the ships in the inner harbour or basin, and to scuttle and sink the two powder-vessels, which contained all the powder belonging to the French ships, as well as that belonging to the distant magazines within the enemy's reach.

The disarray had already begun. The Neapolitans deserted their posts, and stole on board their ships in confusion and disorder; and the next morning, December 18th, the Neapolitan commanding officer at the post of Sepel sent word that there he would no longer remain. The

retreat of the British troops and the evacuation, could not therefore be deferred. Accordingly, in the night, the whole of the troops embarked without the loss of a single man, and fourteen thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven men, women, and children, of the royalists of Toulon, were sheltered in the British ships.

It was now Sir Sidney's turn to come into action. By this time, the Republican forces pressed so energetically upon the place, that its final occupation by them seemed to rest entirely with themselves. It therefore became necessary to decide upon the disposition of the French ships in the harbour and on the stocks, and the arsenal then full of military and naval muniments of war; and this too at the very critical moment, when the extrication of the allied army from their dangerous position was the paramount object of solicitude, and just then occupied nearly all the attention, and absorbed all the naval capabilities, of the combined squadrons.

CHAPTER VI.

Sir Sidney Smith proceeds on his perilous service—Fires the arsenals—The misconduct, or the treachery, of the Spaniards—Explosion of the powder-ships—He re-embarks safely—His despatch.

At the crisis mentioned in the last chapter, Sir William Sidney Smith, having delivered up his troublesome charge to the commander-in-chief Lord Hood, was, as his guest on board of the Victory, then waiting for a passage to England. At this anxious moment he volunteered his services to burn the French fleet, magazines, and everything that could at all be of service to the naval or military equipments of the enemy. This was deemed almost visionary, certainly impracticable with the slender means that could then be afforded to our hero. It was, however, one of those possible impracticabilities in which his genius rejoiced. Against the almost universal opinion, he accomplished the undertaking in a manner that justified his appointment

to so forlorn an enterprise,—ten ships of the line, and several frigates, in the arsenal and inner harbour, with the mast-house, great store-house, and other buildings, being completely destroyed.

It is well understood and confessed by all impartial men, that the fortifications surrounding Toulon were, owing to the treachery and imbecility of our allies, ill defended, and the evacuation of the place too long deferred. Had neither of these contingencies happened, the immense naval force, with all its appointments, would have passed over quietly into the possession of the English, and thousands of the royalist Frenchmen saved, who were slain on the republicans taking the place, or who afterwards fell victims to the ruthless guillotine, or the still more ruthless noyades. This was at the acme of the reign of terror.

The proximate cause of this disaster, which spread confusion and almost terror throughout the English fleet, was, as before related, the permitting the enemy to gain possession of an elevated battery, on a point of land that laid open the British naval force to a destructive cannonade. This post, so commanding, so all-important, was strangely neglected by the military; hence all the confusion, disarray, and misery that ensued.

It was the high destiny of Sir Sidney Smith

gallantly to remedy some of the consequences of this mistake. Already was a large portion of the enemy in the town; plunder and murder had commenced their savage orgies, and, to increase this infliction upon the distracted inhabitants, the galley-slaves had obtained their liberty, when, with his officers and the few men under his command, and surrounded by a tremendous conflagration, he found that he had nearly completed his dangerous service.

But little more remained to be done, when the loud shouts and the republican songs of the enemy announced their approach to the spot where Sir Sidney and his small band were spreading around them destruction. The scene became terrible; for the screams of the wounded, and the roaring and the hissing of the voluminous flames, were drowned, at rapid intervals, by the rattling volleys of musketry, the terrific explosion of shells, and the thunder-emulating booming of the artillery. War revelled in rapine, and whilst his feet were saturated with human blood, his many-toned and hideous voice seemed to shake the smoke-obscured firmament.

Whilst all these horrors were enacting, and which seemed even so terrible to the vindictive and exasperated enemy that their progress was, for a space, arrested, a most overwhelming ex-

plosion of many thousand barrels of gunpowder, on board of the Iris frigate, lying in the inner road, stunned at once the pursuing and the flying, and inflicted a transient stupor upon everything then and there living. The solid ground reeled under the unstable foot, and the waves of the sea undulated menacingly as if they would overwhelm the trembling land. The scene could have been likened only to the horrors of an earthquake, combined with a volcanic eruption.

Below were the tottering and falling houses, the crash of glass, and the cries of the maimed and crushed; above was one vast canopy of lurid fire, from which were descending bursting bombs, fragments of burning timber, and every description of fiery-pointed missiles,—the whole interspersed with flashes of intense and variously coloured light. Every one near the spot seemed to be threatened with instant destruction.

Fortunately, however, only three of Sir Sidney's party lost their lives on this terrible occasion.

It is a lamentable thing, and history will confirm the assertion, that in all combined movements, where men of different nations have to carry them into effect, the most egregious blunders will ensue. The Spaniards have always

been reckoned to be a gallant and brave people—but with more than their share of that parent of all mistakes and misfortunes, obstinacy. A party of these self-willed Spaniards, who were too proud fully to consider the purport of their positive and distinct orders, or too treacherous to obey them, were the cause of all this terror and calamity. They were commanded to go and scuttle and sink the powder-laden frigate—they went and set fire to her.

Now the reader must understand that, up to this period, Sir Sidney went first into the inner harbour, where he destroyed all the shipping he found there, and afterwards repaired on a similar service on shore to the arsenal. When he had completed the destruction of everything in his reach, to his astonishment he first discovered that our fear-paralysed or perfidious allies had not set fire to any one of the ships then lying in the basin before the town; he therefore hastened thither with his boat, to counteract the treachery or the cowardice of the Spaniards. But he was too late. Already had the republicans gained possession of these vessels; already had the boom been laid across the entrance to the basin; already he found that those but just now defenceless hulks were converted into formidable batteries. He was forced to desist from his endeavours to cut the boom, from

the incessant volleys of musketry directed upon his boats from the French flagship and the wall of the royal battery.

Much of the proceedings that followed, and the causes that produced them, must for ever remain enveloped in mystery. Recriminations and charges, many and bitter, have taken place between the English and Spanish, concerning these atrocities. Perfidy and treachery have been openly alleged against our allies. For ourselves, we are rather inclined to suppose that the Spaniards and Italians were so confounded at the novel situation in which they found themselves, that, in doing they knew not what, they left undone that which it was their imperative duty to do, and thus, through their fear-impelled commissions and omissions, they seemed to be treacherous when they were only cowardly.

The grounds of affixing the black stigma of treachery upon the Spaniards are principally these. Early in the occupation of the place, the Spanish admiral communicated to Lord Hood the very bold intelligence that his Catholic Majesty had appointed him, Langara, to be sole commander-in-chief. This, of course, Lord Hood resisted; but whether the treason (if any) sprang from this quarrel, or this quarrel was but the arranged commencement of the treason, we will not pretend to

determine. However, the Don took up a very menacing attitude, for he placed his twenty-one ships of the line so that he completely enclosed the British fleet, consisting only of ten, placing his own ship alongside the Victory, and one three-decker on her bow, and another on her quarter.

The next indication of treachery was an insidious proposal to Lord Hood that the combined fleets should depart from Toulon, and make a diversion in favour of Paoli in Corsica, thus leaving the place at the mercy of the Republicans. He then wished to tempt the English admiral away on an expedition against Tunis; and finally endeavoured to raise a quarrel, because some Corsican men-of-war were riding in the roads with their national flag at their mastheads.

Now, when we look at the supineness of the Spaniards, and consider it in reference to the whole course of their proceedings, though we may not fully condemn, yet we certainly must hesitate to acquit them. Unfortunately the spirit of the two antagonist principles of monarchy and democracy ran so high at this time, that the evidence of the writers of that day, even as to the simplest facts, cannot be relied on. A work was published in France, and translated into English, which distinctly stated that Robespierre said, in one of his official despatches, "Arguments of

weight, and especially golden arguments, seldom fail of having some effect. The Spanish admirals and generals in the Mediterranean had instructions rather to watch than to act with the English." And also, "It was at one time determined to withdraw the army from before Toulon, and retire on the other side of the Durance; when, fortunately, the Spanish courier arrived, and everything was settled between my brother on our part, and Major S. on the other, with respect to Toulon." This brother was one of the commissioners attached to the army of Toulon. It is still further stated that Robespierre asserted, "The Spaniards, in consequence of this agreement, fled on all sides, (being attacked at an appointed time,) and left the English everywhere to bite the dust; but particularly at a stronghold called by them Fort Mulgrave. The ships which the Spaniards had to burn, they did not set fire to. The British ships had more than one escape at this period. Conformably to the agreement, the Spaniards were to attempt the destruction of some others, by cutting the cables, and by blowing up some old French men-of-war, laden with powder, in the harbour. This, indeed, they did, but too late to cause any damage to the English; and in this instance alone have we any reason to complain of the Spaniards."

Speaking of the conflagration of the ships, Bonaparte himself says, "Sir Sidney Smith set them on fire, and they would have been all burned, if the Spaniards had behaved well. It was the prettiest *feu d'artifice* possible."

This dictum certainly goes no farther than a corroboration as to the incapacity of these allies, to assist whom has caused, and is still causing, the loss of so much money, anxiety, and blood.

To return to Sir Sidney Smith's proceedings. Our officer, finding affairs in this critical situation, immediately proceeded to burn, after having liberated the prisoners, the two prison-ships, Le Héros and Thémistocle, which he completely effected. Hardly was this service performed, when he and his gallant little party were astonished by the explosion of the Montreal, another powder-ship, by means equally unexpected and base, and with a shock even greater than that of the former disaster; but the lives of Sir Sidney Smith and the gallant men who were then serving under him were again providentially saved from the imminent danger in which they were so suddenly placed.

Threading a thousand perils, and literally pulling through showers of grape and musketry, the brave band which had thus so much damaged the enemy and served their country, at length reached the Victory in safety. This exploit was

the most striking and the most glorious feature of these ill-conducted proceedings. The fame of our officer was commensurately increased. Men began to look up to him a sone destined, hereafter, to extend the conquests and uphold the honour of the British empire. From the kindness of his natural disposition, and the amenity of his manners, his successes, great and dazzling as they were, created for him less envy than usually attends transcendent merit. Men of all classes and of all ranks spoke well of him. By the seamen he was all but idolised.

We present our readers with Sir Sidney's despatch on this momentous occasion:—

"*Toulon, Dec.* 18. 1793.

"My Lord,—Agreeably to your lordship's order, I proceeded with the Swallow tender, three English and three Spanish gunboats, to the arsenal, and immediately began making the necessary preparations for burning the French ships and stores therein. We found the dock-gates well secured by the judicious arrangements of the governor, although the dockyard people had already substituted the three-coloured cockade for the white one. I did not think it safe to attempt the securing any of them, considering the small force I had with me, and considering that a contest of any kind would occupy our whole

attention, and prevent us from accomplishing our purpose.

" The galley-slaves, to the number of at least six hundred, showed themselves jealous spectators of our operations: their disposition to oppose us was evident; and being unchained, which was unusual, rendered it necessary to keep a watchful eye on them on board the galleys, by pointing the guns of the Swallow tender and one of the gunboats on them in such a manner as to enfilade the quay on which they must have landed to come to us, and assuring them, at the same time, that no harm should happen to them if they remained quiet. The enemy kept up a cross fire of shot and shells on the spot, from Malbosquet and the neighbouring hills, which contributed to keep the galley-slaves in subjection, and operated in every respect favourably for us, by keeping the republican party in the town within their houses, while it occasioned little interruption to our work of preparing and placing combustible matter in the different storehouses, and on board the ships; such was the steadiness of the few brave seamen I had under my command. A great multitude of the enemy continued to draw down the hill towards the dockyard wall; and as the night closed in, they came near enough to pour in an irregular though quick fire of mus-

ketry on us from the Boulangerie, and of cannon from the height which overlooks it. We kept them at bay by discharges of grapeshot from time to time, which prevented their coming so near as to discover the insufficiency of our force to repel a closer attack. A gunboat was stationed to flank the wall on the outside, and two field-pieces were placed within against the wicket usually frequented by the workmen, of whom we were particularly apprehensive. About eight o'clock I had the satisfaction of seeing Lieutenant Gore towing in the Vulcan fireship. Captain Hare, her commander, placed her, agreeably to my directions, in a most masterly manner across the tier of men-of-war, and the additional force of her guns and men diminished my apprehensions of the galley-slaves rising on us, as their manner and occasional tumultuous debates ceased entirely on her appearance. The only noise heard among them was the hammer knocking off their fetters, which humanity forbade my opposing, as they might thereby be more at liberty to save themselves on the conflagration taking place around them. In this situation we continued to wait most anxiously for the hour concerted with the governor for the inflammation of the trains. The moment the signal was made, we had the satisfaction to see the flames rise in every quar-

ter. Lieutenant Tupper was charged with the burning of the general magazine, the pitch, tar, tallow, and oil storehouses, and succeeded most perfectly; the hemp magazine was included in this blaze: its being nearly calm was unfortunate to the spreading of the flames, but two hundred and fifty barrels of tar, divided among the deals and other timber, insured the rapid ignition of that whole quarter which Lieutenant Tupper had undertaken.

"The masthouse was equally set on fire by Lieutenant Middleton of the Britannia. Lieutenant Porter, of the Britannia, continued in a most daring manner to brave the flames, in order to complete the work where the fire seemed to have caught imperfectly. I was obliged to call him off, lest his retreat should become impracticable: his situation was the more perilous, as the enemy's fire redoubled as soon as the amazing blaze of light rendered us distinct objects of their aim. Lieutenant Ironmonger, of the Royals, remained with the guard at the gate till the last, long after the Spanish guard was withdrawn, and was brought safely off by captain Edge of the Alert, to whom I had confided the important service of closing our retreat, and bringing off our detached parties, which were saved to a man. I was sorry to find myself de-

prived of the further services of Captain Hare : he had performed that of placing his fireship to admiration, but was blown into the water, and much scorched, by the explosion of her priming, when in the act of putting the match to it. Lieutenant Gore was also much burnt, and I was consequently deprived of him also, which I regretted the more, from the recollection of his bravery and activity in the warm service of Fort Mulgrave. Mr. Eales, midshipman, who was also with him on this occasion, deserves my praise for his conduct throughout this service. The guns of the fireship going off on both sides as they heated, in the direction that was given them, towards those quarters from whence we were most apprehensive of the enemy forcing their way in upon us, checked their career. Their shouts and republican songs, which we could hear distinctly, continued till they, as well as ourselves, were in a manner thunderstruck by the explosion of some thousand barrels of powder on board the Iris frigate, lying in the inner road, without us, and which had been injudiciously set on fire by the Spanish boats in going off, instead of being sunk as ordered. The concussion of air, and the shower of falling timber on fire, was such as nearly to destroy the whole of us. Lieutenant Patey, of the Terrible, with his whole

boat's crew, nearly perished: the boat was blown to pieces, but the men were picked up alive. The Union gunboat, which was nearest to the Iris, suffered considerably, Mr. Young being killed, with three men, and the vessel shaken to pieces. I had given it in charge to the Spanish officers to fire the ship in the basin before the town, but they returned, and reported that various obstacles had prevented their entering it. We attempted it together as soon as we had completed the business in the arsenal, but were repulsed, in our attempt to cut the boom, by repeated volleys of musketry from the flagship and the wall of the Battery Royal. The cannon of this battery had been spiked by the judicious preacutions taken by the governor previously to the evacuation of the town.

"The failure of our attempt on the ships in the basin before the town, owing to the insufficiency of our force, made me regret that the Spanish gunboats had been withdrawn from me to perform other service. The adjutant Don Pedro Cotiella, Don Francisco Riguielme, and Don Francisco Truxillo, remained with me to the last; and I feel bound to bear testimony to the zeal and activity with which they performed the most essential services during the whole of this business, as far as the insufficiency of their

force allowed it, being reduced, by the retreat of the gunboats, to a single felucca, and a mortar-boat which had expended its ammunition, but contained thirty men with cutlasses.

"We now proceeded to burn the Hero and Themistocles, two seventy-four gun ships, lying in the inner road. Our approach to them had hitherto been impracticable in boats, as the French prisoners, who had been left in the latter ship, were still in possession of her, and had shown a determination to resist our attempt to come on board. The scene of conflagration around them, heightened by the late tremendous explosion, had, however, awakened their fears for their lives. Thinking this to be the case, I addressed them, expressing my readiness to land them in a place of safety, if they would submit; and they thankfully accepted the offer, showing themselves to be completely intimidated, and very grateful for our humane intentions towards them, in not attempting to burn them with the ship. It was necessary to proceed with precaution, as they were more numerous than ourselves. We at length completed their disembarkation, and then set her on fire. On this occasion I had nearly lost my valuable friend and assistant, Lieutenant Miller of the Windsor Castle, who had staid so long on board, to insure the fire

taking, that it gained on him suddenly, and it was not without being very much scorched, and at the risk of being suffocated, that we could approach the ship to take him in. The loss to the service would have been very great, had we not succeeded in our endeavours to save him. Mr. Knight, midshipman of the Windsor Castle, who was in the boat with me, showed much activity and address on the occasion, as well as firmness throughout the day.

"The explosion of a second powder-vessel equally unexpected, and with a shock even greater than the first, again put us in the most imminent danger of perishing; and when it is considered that we were within the sphere of the falling timber, it is next to miraculous that no one piece, of the many which made the water foam around us, happened to touch either the Swallow or the three boats with me.

"Having now set fire to everything within our reach, exhausted our combustible preparations and our strength to such a degree that the men absolutely dropped on the oars, we directed our course to join the fleet, running the gauntlet under a few ill-directed shot from the forts of Balaguier and Aiguillette, now occupied by the enemy; but, fortunately, without loss of any kind, we proceeded to the place appointed for the

embarkation of the troops, and took off as many as we could carry. It would be injustice to those officers whom I have omitted to name, from their not having been so immediately under my eye, if I did not acknowledge myself indebted to them all for their extraordinary exertions in the execution of this great national object. The quickness with which the inflammation took effect on my signal, its extent and duration, are the best evidences that every officer and man was ready at his post, and firm under most perilous circumstances.

"We can ascertain that the fire extended to at least ten sail of the line; how much farther we cannot say. The loss of the general magazine, and of the quantity of pitch, tar, rosin, hemp, timber, cordage, and gunpowder, must considerably impede the equipment of the few ships that remain. I am sorry to have been obliged to leave any, but I hope your lordship will be satisfied that we did as much as our circumscribed means enabled us to do in limited time, pressed as we were by a force so much superior to us. I have the honour to be, &c.

"W. SIDNEY SMITH.

"Right hon. Lord Hood, &c. &c. &c." *

* Here follows a list of the officers employed, and of the killed and wounded:

Lord Hood showed at once his judgment and his sense of the value of Sir Sidney's services, by appointing him to be the bearer of the despatches to England, containing an account of these stir-

List of ships of the line, frigates, and sloops, of the department of Toulon.

In the road where the English fleet entered Toulon:

SHIPS OF THE LINE.

Now with the English fleet.

	Guns.
Le Commerce de Marseilles	120
Le Pompée	74

Burnt at Toulon.

Le Tonnant	80
L'Heureux	74
Le Centaur	74
Le Commerce de Bordeaux	74
Le Destin	74
Le Lys	74
Le Héros	74
Le Thémistocle	74
Le Dugay Trouin	74

Sent into the French ports on the Atlantic, with French seamen, &c.

Le Patriote	74
L'Apollon	74
L'Orion	74
L'Entreprenant	74

Burnt at Leghorn.

	Guns.
Le Scipion	74

Remaining at Toulon.

Le Genereux	74

FRIGATES.

Now with the English fleet.

Le Perle	40
L'Aréthuse	40

Fitted out by the English.

L'Aurora	32

Put into commission by order of Lord Hood.

La Topaze	32

Remaining in the power of the Sardinians.

L'Alceste	32

SLOOPS.

Now with the English fleet.

La Poulette	26
Le Tarleston	14

Burnt at Toulon.

La Caroline	20
L'Auguste	20

ring events. He was favourably—indeed, without incurring the blame of exaggeration, we may

	Guns.
Fitted out by the English.	
La Belette	26
La Prosélyte	24
La Sincère	20
Le Mulet	20
La Moselle	20
Fitted out by the Neapolitans.	
L'Employe	20
Fitted out by the Spaniards.	
La Petite Aurore	18
Sent to Bordeaux.	
Le Pluvier	20
Fitting out when the English fleet entered Toulon:	
SHIPS OF THE LINE.	
Burnt at Toulon.	
Le Triomphant	80
Le Suffisant	74
Now with the English fleet.	
Le Puissant	74
Remaining at Toulon.	
Le Dauphin Royal	120
FRIGATE.	
Burnt at Toulon.	
Le Serieuse	32

	Guns.
In the harbour, in want of repair:	
SHIPS.	
Burnt at Toulon.	
Le Mercure	74
La Couronne	80
Le Conquerant	74
Le Dictateur	74
Remaining at Toulon.	
Le Languedoc	80
Le Censeur	74
Le Guerrier	74
Le Souverain	74
Unfit for Service.	
L'Alcide	74
FRIGATES.	
Burnt at Toulon.	
Le Courageux	32
L'Iphigenie	32
L'Alerte	16
Having on board the powder magazines, burnt at Toulon.	
L'Iris	32
Le Montreal	32
Fitted out by the English as a bomb-ketch.	
La Lutine	32

say, was enthusiastically received in London. He was caressed at the Admiralty, and distinguished at the court of his sovereign.

As it is our office to record the events of Sir Sidney's life more as a public than as a private character, we shall not inflate these volumes with anecdotes, which, however pleasing in themselves, have nothing to do with the official career of his usefulness and of his glory. It will be sufficient to say, that, during his short cessation from actual service, he was sought for and cherished in the best and most distinguished circles.

	Guns.
Remaining at Toulon.	
La Bretonne - -	18
In commission before the English fleet entered Toulon:	
SHIP	
In the Levant.	
La Duquesne - -	74
FRIGATES AND SLOOPS.	
In the Levant.	
La Sibylle - -	40
La Sensible - -	32
La Melpomène - -	40
La Minerve - -	40
La Fortunée - -	32
La Flèche - - -	24
La Fauvette - -	24

	Guns.
Taken by the English.	
L'Imperieuse - -	40
La Modeste - -	32
L'Eclair - - -	20
At Ville Franche.	
La Vestale - -	36
La Badine - -	24
Le Hazard - -	30
At Corsica.	
La Mignon - -	32
At Cette.	
La Brune - -	24
In ordinary at Toulon.	
La Junon - -	40
Building.	
One ship of - -	74
Two frigates - -	40

CHAPTER VII.

Appointed to the Diamond—His services on the Channel station—Attacks two French ships under La Hogue—Destroys a French corvette—Attacks a French squadron which had taken shelter in the Port of Herqui.

HAVING, by the late splendid though incomplete operations, given earnest to his superior officers, and to the country at large, that he was possessed of abilities of the highest order, Sir Wm. Sidney Smith was appointed by the Lords of the Admiralty, in the commencement of the year 1794, to the command of the Diamond frigate, on the station of the British Channel.

The officers and the crew of the Diamond soon experienced the beneficial effects of his enlightened and energetic command. At this period very many and very hurtful prejudices existed in the service. A mixture of firmness and conciliation in the carrying out of improve-

ments soon removed most of the anomalies that interfered with the due efficiency of the force under Captain Sir Sidney Smith's command. The Diamond became one of the most perfect specimens of a vessel of war in the British navy. Next to the conquest or destruction of the enemy, the greatest glory that can be achieved by the commander is the ennobling of the force under his government by judicious expedients, and the employing an enlightened discipline to enable him to do so.

It would be tedious to enumerate all the minutiæ of a blockading cruise in the Channel—the chase by day, and the dangerous approximation to the enemy's harbour by night—the interchange of shot with the batteries, and the verifying of the charts, under the very guns of the enemy, by soundings in the boats. Though each of these operations may seem to be but a little matter of itself, the whole makes a service no less arduous than it is necessary. Insignificant as this may appear to be, it affords an ample field in which the abilities of the officer in command can be fairly and almost fully tested.

No sooner had the year 1795 been ushered in by the din of a war soon to become almost universal, than the government at home received what was considered to be authentic information that the French fleet, under Admiral Villare de Joyeuse,

had ventured from the protection of the harbour of Brest, and was actually upon the open seas, on a cruise. On the 2nd of January, Sir John Borlase Warren, an officer who had already distinguished himself, sailed from Falmouth, with a squadron of frigates, to reconnoitre Brest and the contiguous line of French coast. To penetrate into the mouth of this harbour was the hazardous commission that devolved on Captain Smith. The Diamond, in an incredibly short space of time, was so completely Frenchified in appearance—but in appearance only—that her gallant captain was enabled completely to deceive the enemy. With the utmost coolness he sailed into the harbour in the evening, remained there the whole of the night, and departed early on the following morning, without, for a moment, having his disguise suspected. In returning from this bold undertaking, he actually passed within hail of a French line-of-battle ship.

Having, by this manœuvre, satisfactorily ascertained that the French fleet had really ventured to put to sea, he returned in safety with the important intelligence to his anxious commodore.

Nothing particularly worth narrating occurred to our officer until the month of May following, when he assisted at the capture of a convoy of transports. His untiring vigilance was next

exhibited on the 4th of July following, when he made a brave but ineffectual attempt to capture two French ships of war, having under their protection a large convoy of merchant vessels. In this gallant affair the batteries of La Hogue proved too strong for the attacking force. Even this failure had more than its compensating advantages, in the terror that it occasioned to the enemy, and the paralysing opinion that it gave them of British daring. In this attempt the Diamond had the misfortune to have one man killed and two wounded.

Sir Sidney's official despatch was as follows :—

"*Diamond, at anchor off the Island of St. Marcou, July* 5, 1795.

"Sir,—In pursuance of the orders of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, I sailed from St. Helen's on the evening of the 1st instant, and stretched across the Channel towards Cherbourg, his Majesty's ships Syren and Sybille, also four gunboats, in company. On looking into that port, we found that one of the three frigates which had been seen there the last time we were off, was missing: the master of a neutral vessel, just come out, informed me that she had sailed to the eastward, and I accordingly proceeded in quest of her. Going round Cape Barfleur, we saw two ships,

one of them having the appearance of the frigate in question, at anchor under the sand, and immediately made sail towards them; we soon after saw a convoy coming alongshore within the islands of Marcou. The wind dying away, and the ebb-tide making against me, I was obliged to anchor, and had the mortification of seeing the enemy's vessels drift with the tide under the batteries of La Hogue, without being able to approach them. At four o'clock in the morning of yesterday, the breeze springing up with the first of the flood, I made the signal to the squadron, and weighed and worked up towards the enemy's ships, which we observed warping closer inshore under the battery on La Hogue Point.

"As we approached, I made the signal for each ship to engage as she came up with the enemy, and at nine o'clock began the action in the Diamond. The other frigates, having been sent in chase in different quarters the day before, had not been able to anchor so near as we did, and were consequently to leeward, as were two of the gunboats. The Fearless and the Attack were with me, and their commanders conducted them in a manner to merit my approbation, by drawing off the attention of the enemy's gunboats, of which they had also two. The small vessels of the convoy ran into the pier before the town;

the largest, a corvette, continued warping into shoal water; we followed, engaging her and the batteries for three quarters of an hour, when, finding that the enemy's ship had attained a situation where it was impossible to get fairly alongside of her without grounding likewise, and the pilots being positive as to the necessity of hauling off from the shore, where the water had already begun to ebb, I acquiesced under their representations, and wore ship. The Syren and Sibylle were come up by this time, and the zeal and ability of their commanders would, I am persuaded, have carried them into action with some effect, if I had not annulled the signal to engage, which I did, to prevent them getting disabled, as we were, when we had no longer a prospect of making ourselves masters of the enemy's ship. She had suffered in proportion, and we now see her lying on her broadside with her yards and topmasts struck, but, I am sorry to say, so much sheltered by the reef which runs off from La Hogue Point, that I cannot indulge a hope of her being destroyed.

"In justice to my officers and ship's company, I must add, that their conduct was such as gave me satisfaction. I received the most able assistance from the first lieutenant, Mr. Pine, and Mr. Wilkie, the master, in working the ship, on the

precision of which everything depended, circumstanced as we were with respect to the shoals and the enemy. The guns of the main-deck were well served under the direction of Lieutenants Pearson and Sandsbury, and the men were cool and collected.

"No officer was hurt; but I am sorry to say that I have lost one of the best quartermasters in the ship, Thomas Gullen, killed, and two seamen wounded; the enemy fired high, or we should have suffered more materially from their red-hot shot, the marks of which were visible in the rigging. We have shifted our fore and main topmasts, which, with two topsail-yards, were shot through; and having repaired our other more trifling damages, I shall proceed in the attainment of the objects of the cruise. Fishing-boats, with which we have had an intercourse, confirm all other accounts of distress for want of provisions, and the consequent discontent in this distracted country.

"I have the honour, &c.

"W. SIDNEY SMITH."

"*Evan Nepean, Esq.*"

There is but little in this despatch worthy of notice, but as a sample of this sort of composition. The skirmish was itself trifling, and the service it

rendered to the country but small. It evinces, however, an indomitable purpose of effecting everything within the reach of human power, and is, to our eyes, very valuable on account of the mention of his quartermaster. It is usual, in these chronicles of slaughter, to record the deaths of the petty officers and seamen, in the mass only. The exemption to this rule is very honourable to Sir Sidney Smith—even on so slight an occasion as was afforded to him by this letter of service. Honours, rewards, and distinctions should be scattered more liberally among the foremast men.

Very shortly after, as the accuracy of the English charts of parts of the coasts of Normandy was much doubted, Captain Sir Sidney Smith made very numerous soundings, and minute observations on the nature of the ground over which the tides of this part of the Channel so impetuously rush. By these laudable exertions, the Admiralty charts were brought very nearly into a state of perfection. He also, about this time, by the means of his boats, took possession of the small islands of St. Marcou, situate about four miles distance from the same coast. Though there was nothing apparently very splendid in this conquest, and the surface of territory added to the British dominions not very extensive, yet

it proved a very useful acquisition, as it afforded a point from whence, a little time afterwards, a regular communication was established with the French royalists.

In this year nothing of moment occurred until the latter end of August, when Captain Sidney Smith fell in with and gave chase to the French corvette La Nationale, of two-and-twenty guns, which, in endeavouring to elude the pursuit of the Diamond amid the labyrinth of rocks before Treguier, found the fate that she endeavoured to avoid. In hugging the reefs too closely, she struck on the Roanna. The breeze was fresh, and the eddying and foaming waters toiled among the crags, and flung its waves completely over the rock-fettered vessel. She was a beautiful craft, and for some time seemed to brave, with impunity, the endless assaults of the angry seas. But her doom had gone forth, and, straining and groaning terribly, gave unequivocal signs of approaching dissolution. It was then that repentance came too late upon the unhappy crew, for having preferred the insidious and treacherous asylum of rocks and crags to the generosity of a brave enemy.

In this situation, and whilst she was getting out her boats, the devoted corvette filled and fell over. Had national law and the usages of war

been strictly adhered to, Sidney Smith would have been justified in leaving the enemy to their fate, who had thus, to avoid capture, all but wantonly destroyed their ship: at least, upon the mildest construction, he had sufficient cause not to risk the lives of his own seamen in a hazardous attempt to save those of his enemies. But these considerations weighed but lightly with his chivalrous feeling of humanity. The boats of the Diamond were soon amidst the boiling surf, and alongside of the separating vessel. Her own boats had already taken on board a considerable part of her crew; and those of Captain Smith's frigate were only able to save nine.

The French captain was washed from the wreck, and perished but a few seconds before the British boats were alongside his vessel. More than twenty of the French experienced a similar fate. The swell was tremendous, and in a very short time not a vestige of the wreck was to be seen. The sea was so much agitated that the Diamond, in waiting for her boats, was forced to come to single anchor in the offing.

On the 17th of March, 1796, (the following year,) this enterprising commander having received intelligence that a small squadron of armed vessels, consisting of one corvette, four brigs, two sloops, and three luggers, had taken

shelter in the small fort of Herqui, near Cape Trehel, he immediately, with his own frigate, the Diamond, the Liberty man-of-war brig, and the Aristocrat cutter, repaired to this place. The channel leading to this small port is narrow and intricate, and strongly defended by all the art of fortification. However, this formidable array of defence was seen only to be despised. The ships under the command of Sir Sidney Smith stood boldly in, and commenced cannonading the batteries, whilst Lieutenant Pine of the Diamond, with a party of seamen, and Lieutenant Carter of the same ship, with a party of marines, under the cover of the fire, stormed and most gallantly carried these defences. In this desperate service Lieutenant Pine was seriously, and Lieutenant Carter mortally, wounded. The French vessels were all burned, with the exception of one of the luggers, which kept up its fire to the last. The corvette was a vessel of some force, mounting sixteen guns, and was named L'Etourdie. The loss of the English in this attack was two seamen killed and five wounded, exclusive of the officers of whom we have before spoken—a loss wonderfully small, considering the arduous nature of the service performed, and the strength of the obstacles to be overcome. We subjoin Sir Sidney's despatch on the occasion.

"*Diamond, off Cape Trehel, March* 18, 1796.

"Sir,—Having received information that the armed vessels detached by the Prince of Bouillon had chased a convoy, consisting of a corvette, three luggers, four brigs, and two sloops, into Herqui, I proceeded off that port to reconnoitre their position and sound the channel, which I found very narrow and intricate. I succeeded, however, in gaining a knowledge of these points sufficient to determine me to attack them in the Diamond without loss of time, and without waiting for the junction of any part of the squadron, lest the enemy should fortify themselves still farther on our appearance. Lieutenant M'Kinley of the Liberty brig, and Lieutenant Gosset of the Aristocrat lugger, joined me off the Cape, and, though not under my orders, very handsomely offered their services, which I accepted, as small vessels were essentially necessary in such an operation. The permanent fortifications for the defence of the bay are two batteries on a high rocky promontory. We observed the enemy to be very busily employed in mounting a detached gun on a very commanding point of the entrance. At one o'clock yesterday afternoon this gun opened upon us as we passed; the Diamond's fire, however, silenced it in eleven minutes. The others opened on us as we came round the point,

and their commanding situation giving them a decided advantage over a ship in our position, I judged it necessary to adopt another mode of attack, and accordingly detached the marines and boarders to land behind the point, and take the batteries in the rear. As the boats approached the beach, they met with a warm reception, and a temporary check, from a body of troops drawn up to oppose their landing; the situation was critical. The ship being exposed to a most galling fire, and in intricate pilotage, with a considerable portion of her men thus detached, I pointed out to Lieutenant Pine the apparent practicability of climbing the precipice in front of the batteries, which he readily perceived, and with an alacrity and bravery of which I have had many proofs in the course of our service together, he undertook and executed this hazardous service, landed immediately under the guns, and rendered himself master of them before the column of troops could regain the heights. The fire from the ship was directed to cover our men in this operation; it checked the enemy in their advancement, and the re-embarkation was effected, as soon as the guns were spiked, without the loss of a man, though we have to regret Lieutenant Carter, of the marines, being dangerously wounded on this occasion. The enemy's guns, three twenty-four

pounders, being silenced and rendered useless for the time, we proceeded to attack the corvette and the other armed vessels, which had, by this time, opened their fire on us to cover the operation of hauling themselves on shore. The Diamond had anchored as close to the corvette as her draught of water would allow. The Liberty brig was able to approach near, and on this occasion I cannot omit to mention the very gallant and judicious manner in which Lieutenant M'Kinley, her commander, brought this vessel into action, profiting by her light draught of water to follow the corvette close. The enemy's fire soon slackened, and the crew being observed to be making for the shore on the English colours being hoisted on the hill, I made the signal for the boats, manned and armed, to board, directing Lieutenant Gosset in the lugger to cover them. This service was executed by the party from the shore, under the direction of Lieutenant Pine, in a manner that does them infinite credit, and him every honour as a brave man and an able officer. The enemy's troops occupied the high projecting rocks all round the vessels, whence they kept up an incessant fire of musketry, and the utmost that could be effected at the moment was to set fire to the corvette (named L'Etourdie, of sixteen guns, twelve-pounders, on

the main-deck), and one of the merchant brigs, since, as the tide fell, the enemy pressed down on the sands close to the vessels; Lieutenant Pine therefore returned on board, having received a severe contusion on the breast from a musket-ball. As the tide rose again, it became practicable to make a second attempt to burn the remaining vessels; Lieutenant Pearson was accordingly detached for that purpose with the boats, and I am happy to add, his gallant exertions succeeded to the utmost of my hopes, notwithstanding the renewed and heavy fire of musketry from the shore. This fire was returned with great spirit and evident good effect; and I was much pleased with the conduct of Lieutenant Gosset in the hired lugger, and Mr. Knight in the Diamond's launch, who covered the approach and retreat of the boats. The vessels were all burnt, except an armed lugger which kept up her fire to the last. The wind and tide suiting at ten at night to come out of the harbour again, we weighed and repassed the Point of Herqui, from which we received a few shot, the enemy having found means to restore one of the guns to activity. Our loss, as appears by the enclosed return, is trifling, considering the nature of the enterprise, and the length of time we were exposed to the enemy's fire. Theirs, I am per-

suaded, must have been very great, from the numbers within the range of the shot and shells. The conduct of every officer and man under my command meets with my warmest approbation. It would be superfluous to particularise any others than those I have named: suffice it to say, the characteristic bravery and activity of British seamen never were more conspicuous. Lieutenant Pine will have the honour to present their Lordships with the colours which he struck on the battery, and I beg leave to recommend him particularly to their Lordships, as a most meritorious officer.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"W. SIDNEY SMITH.

"*Evan Nepean, Esq. Secretary to the Admiralty.*"

A return of the killed and wounded belonging to his Majesty's Ship Diamond, in the three Attacks of the Enemy's Batteries and Shipping in Herqui, the 7th of March, 1796.

"Killed—two seamen. Wounded—First Lieutenant Horace Pine, Lieutenant Carter of the Marines, and five seamen.

"W. S. SMITH."

This feat is one of those acts of daring, almost peculiar to the British navy, that success only

seems to justify. The actual gain to the English cause, and the positive detriment to the enemy, seem almost trifling when compared with the risk. As glory is generally great as to the magnitude of the act, and a defeat in this case would have been inglorious in the extreme, we must examine more deeply into the question before we can properly appreciate small but heroical acts like the above. It is in their moral effect on the enemy on the one hand, and on our national character on the other, that we must look for their excellence. If a nation supposes that its foe will dare everything, that foe will prove little short of what it has the credit for. As far as regards the nation in whose favour is the presentiment, that nation will be in general victorious, although the force opposed to it be reckoned superior; and should this over-confidence produce a rashness of action that entails defeat, the victory will be so dearly sold, that victors will be cautious not again to reap such another victory.

This line of argument more forcibly applies to the naval than to the military service. The latter depends more upon combination, strategy, and previous arrangement, and the calculation of chances enters much less into the plan of operations. But, in a naval engagement, how much depends upon accident! A flaw of wind,

a stray shot, one person deficient in his duty, and all is lost, save honour. Be it remembered always, that seamen fight over, and almost in contact with, their magazines. Truly it is a mighty game of chance, but a game that is sure to be lost for want of skill, and yet, with the greatest skill, may be gloriously lost for the want of fortune. It seems, then, most wise to dare all, but dare wisely; and few, nay none, have been more wise in their daring than Sir Sidney Smith.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sir Sidney Smith's personal appearance at this time—Cuts out a French lugger near Havre—Is drifted with his prize up the Seine—With his party is captured—Speculations of the French upon his conduct.

At this period, when the Diamond came into harbour to refit for service after her various cruises, Sir Sidney Smith used frequently to come up to London, and mingle with the abounding festivities of the metropolis. Though he had his peculiarities, yet, with many and strong temptations, he might justly be denominated "a steady man." At this time he was decidedly handsome, and, though not tall, of a compact, well-built, symmetrical frame, with a dark and somewhat Hebraical countenance, and a profusion of jet-black curling hair. Notwithstanding the fierce bravery of his character, his features were always remarkable for a degree of refinement, not often found either in the pale student

or the silken courtier. In his character, mind predominated.

He had his singularities, and where is the thorough-bred seaman who has not? He had himself trained a beautiful and docile horse into an amusing playmate, as well as a valuable servant. When told to give a prance for "King George," he would rear on his hind legs, and dance like a well-educated dog. When requested to pay the like compliment to Bonaparte, he would take the request as an insult; stiffen out his limbs into an attitude of defiance, and snort indignantly. When mounting his favourite Bucephalus at the door of his hotel, Captain Smith would do it in the most approved style of the fashionable equestrians of the day, and preserve all the proprieties of equitation, until he was fairly clear of the suburbs. Then would he fling the stirrups across the back of his horse, settle himself sailor-fashion in his saddle, and ride as if he were chasing the wind, and the wind-chasing promises of amendment.

We are now approaching one of the principal events of our hero's life; but our friends must not suppose that we use the term hero in the novel, but in the historical, acceptation of the word. This act, which terminated so unfortunately for him, seems to have been of a nature

much less hazardous than that which we have just narrated, which took place off Herqui, and to have been planned with scientific foresight; yet the results were not only disastrous to our gallant commander, but also highly detrimental to the interests of his country, in depriving it, for a length of time, of his invaluable services. On the 8th of March, being near the shore off Havre, with his boats, on a reconnoissance, he fell in with and took possession of a French lugger privateer, which, by the strong influx of the tide, was, with its captors and their boats, carried a considerable way up the Seine, and far beyond the numerous forts. Thus unpleasantly situated, it may be fairly said, in the interior of the country, he found himself in a situation not very dissimilar from that of the renowned nephew of Gil Perez.

Thus entrapped, Sir Sidney Smith remained during the whole night. The first breaking of the morning presented to the French a very curious and unaccustomed picture. There lay in the middle of their own river the long black hull of the lugger, lately theirs, in tow by a string of English boats, the crews of which were pulling with a strength and energy that British seamen only can display. Great was the Gallic commotion. Amid the incessant crowing of their national cocks, which

were doing their matutinal duty this fine spring morning, in announcing the commencement of another day, was heard the clamour of the national guard, the shouting of the peasantry on the river, and the shriller cries of the females, mingled with the baying of innumerable dogs. and the calling of the canonniers to each other, as they rushed into their various forts and unlimbered the guns.

In this crisis, the enemy seems to have wanted neither courage nor conduct; for in addition to the fire from the batteries, which played upon the boats and the prize, several gunboats and other armed vessels attacked this little party, and, in less than an hour, another lugger, of force superior to the one captured, was warped out and made to engage her late consort. This unequal fight lasted a considerable time, although Sir Sidney Smith was exposed to the fire of much heavier metal, and had, at the same time, to guard the captive Frenchmen. Never was a combat more unequal, or an unequal combat more obstinately sustained. At this period our officer seems to have been gifted with a charmed life, for the grape-shot was poured into his vessel literally in showers. After having, of his little force, seen eleven men put *hors de combat*, that is to say, four killed and seven badly wounded,

he had to undergo that severest of mortifications, to haul down the English colours that had been floating over the French, and to render up himself, his boats, his prize, and his companions prisoners of war, to the number of somewhere about twenty.

As all this passed fully in the view of the remaining officers and seamen of the Diamond, they were extremely mortified at not being able to render their captain and their companions the least assistance. They did, however, all that they could. They sent in a flag of truce to Havre, requesting to know if their highly-valued captain was unwounded, and entreating for him every indulgence compatible with his present unfortunate situation. The reply was courteous, and full of promise; but the courtesy was hollow, and the promise shamefully broken, as a detail of the indignities to which Sir Sidney was subsequently exposed will fully exemplify.

So daring was this act, and so little were the apparent advantages to be gained by the risk, that the French could not well understand it, and assigned a thousand contradictory motives for this conduct, not one of them, probably, the true one. We have stated the facts as given to the world officially by Sir Sidney. There may have been some deep political design in thus ventur-

ing into "the bowels of the land"—some occult manœuvre that it would be treachery to reveal.

Among other vague surmises of the French, was one, that he himself, or in the person of Monsieur T., was on an extensive, and to the French dangerous espionage, and under this impression the French at first confined him in the *Temple* as a spy. How they could have come to this conclusion is somewhat difficult to determine, seeing that he came into Havre, though on a small scale, attended with all "the pomp and circumstance of war."

So serious, however, did Sir Sidney find this conviction on the minds of those who then ruled the destinies of the French, that our hero thought it necessary to appeal to the good sense and generosity of Bonaparte, on his return from Italy; but even he, who, when not crossed in his ambitious views, had no deficiency of generosity and compassion, found the circumstances, as they were generally represented, so strong against him, and the manner of his capture so ambiguous, that he would not interfere in the prisoner's favour.

Others, who knew that he was actually taken in open war, with the command of men with arms in their hands, and in actual possession of

a capture, became ingenious in other explanations, which appear to us equally ridiculous and remote from the truth. Some said that it was to win a foolish bet, others that it was a female attraction; and not a few, for an overwhelming desire to go to the theatre at Havre. That he was taken in a very singular position is certain, but we believe ours to be the true account of the matter.

His justly deserved fame: his unceasing vigilance, and his courage bordering on rashness, had rendered him peculiarly obnoxious to the revolutionised nation, and the French Directors showed the respect they felt for his heroism by departing from the established system, consecrated by the law of nations, which humanely prescribes an exchange of prisoners during the continuance of war. Captain Sir Sidney Smith was not to be exchanged. He was conveyed to Paris, and confined in the Temple for the space of two years—a time truly dreadful when spent in rigid incarceration.

It would not be foreign to the subject, were we to pour out the vials of our indignation upon such unworthy and dastardly conduct as was then exhibited by these *soi-disant* renovators of human institutions, the republican French authorities. But abhorrent as were their proceedings towards

Sir Sidney Smith and several other distinguished captives, it was mercy and beneficence compared with that which they displayed to the best and bravest of their own countrymen. Truly the regeneration of the human race was attempted in the brazen furnace of cruelty, and fed with the flames of democratic and dastardly revenge.

The above-mentioned little skirmish, so awkward in its results to Sir Sidney Smith, furnishes us with an example of that which we have just advanced, that in naval operations the best conduct is often controlled and baffled by chance. When the privateer lugger was at first taken possession of, there was a steady breeze blowing from off the land, but before things could be well arranged on board of her by the captors, there fell a dead calm, and she began to drift rapidly up the Seine. It may be urged that she ought to have been abandoned after having been scuttled. But Sir Sidney had a right also to depend upon the chapter of chances. The night before him was long, and the tide would certainly turn, and the wind probably change. We do not think that there is a British officer in the service who would not have acted in a similar manner.

CHAPTER IX.

Sir Sidney Smith badly treated as a prisoner of war—Removed to Paris, to the prison called the Abbaye—Placed under unwarrantable restrictions—Opens a communication wiih some ladies to aid his escape.

We are now to consider our subject as a captive, and view him in the struggle against the oppression and tyranny of the French authorities. We see him no longer controlling and directing the energies of hundreds of seamen-warriors, with the boundless ocean for the scene of action—the freest of the free, and with none other restraint, either upon deed or will, than the prudential dictates of his own magnanimous mind. No, for a space, we must view him no more in this glorious light, but consider him as concentrating all his mental energies within the walls of a strongly guarded prison, waging with unlimited power the war only of the mind, yet still glorious, still

unshaken and unconquered. How many gallant men who are heroes on the field and on the wave, are less than women in the cell! If these spirits be not fed with the atmosphere of liberty, they pine and dwindle away until the light of their lives expires, and they go mad or die. After all, the dungeon is the true testing place for greatness of soul. Infinitely more easy is it to be heroic on the scaffold or in the breach, for these are but the efforts of the moment, than to remain for years in a prison unsubdued. How Sir Sidney Smith bore this terrible ordeal will be shortly seen. Were we writing a romance instead of a biography, the two years of Sir Sidney Smith's confinement would amply supply us with exciting materials sufficient for two volumes. Fears, hopes, despondency, even love, were all in their turn brought into play. When Sir Sidney was captured, he was accompanied by his secretary and a gentleman of the name of T——, who had emigrated, and was in constant attendance on Sir Sidney in the hope of serving the royalist cause. Thus suddenly and unexpectedly finding himself a captive in a country where he would be looked upon as a traitor and executed as a spy, the commodore arranged with him that he should assume the character of his servant; and so well did he

act up to the disguise, that he was never suspected for a moment. He was called John, by his supposititious master, and Mr. T.'s assimilation of the menial proved to be perfect.

At Havre, Sir Sidney was treated with the most unjustifiable rigour, subjected to insult, taunted with being a spy, and threatened with a trial by a military commission. So obnoxious had he become by his activity, and the detriment he had been to his enemies, that they would have gladly hung him, had not the fear of retaliation prevented this mean vengeance. He was, however, a prisoner much too valuable to be permitted to remain so near the sea-coast, and the French government accordingly ordered his removal to Paris. In that metropolis, he was at first confined to the prison called the Abbaye, and, with his two companions in adversity, kept under the most rigorous surveillance as well as the closest confinement.

But no external circumstances could paralyse the activity of a mind such as Sir Sidney's. Escape formed the constant object of his thoughts. He did not confine himself to idle wishes, but set about deeds. His consultations with his fellow sufferers were incessant, but such was the rigour of his custodiers that, for a length of time, nothing feasible could be suggested. The window

of their common sitting-room looked into the street, and thus brought liberty, though not within their reach, in a most tantalising proximity. Looking out thus continually upon the general thoroughfare of their fellow men held out to them, without cessation, illusive hopes. Indeed, they felt certain that, sooner or later, this circumstance would aid them in their escape.

Whenever there is anything remarkably dangerous and remarkably chivalrous to perform, (the usual deeds of war excepted,) we are sure to find woman the principal agent. Three ladies, who could see the prisoners from the windows of their apartment, by the blessed feminine intuition immediately took a lively interest in their fate. Their ingenuity kept pace with their generous sympathy. They rapidly learned to exchange intelligence with the objects of their solicitude by the means of signals, and a regular correspondence immediately ensued.

So unceasing and lynx-eyed was the vigilance to which every action of Sir Sidney Smith was subjected, that he was forced to adopt a very novel sort of telegraph, wherewith to communicate with his fair correspondents. It was the catching and destroying flies upon the different squares of glass that admitted light to his

apartment. Thus several minute lives were sacrificed, before the imprisoned hero could well rid himself of a single idea. We have read of the great waste of fly-life for the amusement of a Roman emperor, but the necessity of this wholesale slaughter on the part of the gallant Sir Sidney must form his apology.

These ladies made the proposition themselves, to do all that lay in their power to aid them in their escape; an offer, we may be sure, that Sir Sidney accepted with an eager gratitude, and they instantly began operations in his behalf.

Before the stern moralist condemns these womanly exertions in favour of the unfortunate on the score of the want of patriotism, it must be remembered that the dominant party in France was not then the most numerous, and that there was virtue in a cherished, though secret, loyalty to the vanquished royal cause. They had not, however, the reward of success for their ceaseless exertions, and the enormous expenses to which they freely subjected themselves. They continually contrived to elude the vigilance of Sir Sidney's keepers. On both sides borrowed names were used, taken from the Grecian Mythology, so that the three prisoners were in direct correspondence with three of the Muses, Thalia, Melpomene, and Clio.

But all their exertions were unavailing, all their little plans frustrated. The only good that they were able to effect, was feeding and supporting the minds of their *protegés* with that most delicious of nutriments, hope. Scheme after scheme failed, and in the midst of a very plausible one, Sir Sidney and his companions were suddenly removed into the Temple.

But the walls of the Temple were not more impervious to them than had been those of the Abbaye. They soon contrived to renew their correspondence, and not a day passed that did not find them provided with some new plan for escape. The captive commodore, at first, accepted them all with eagerness, but mature reflection soon convinced him that they were as visionary as they were generous. In the first place, he was resolved not to leave his secretary behind him, and his resolution was still stronger in favour of the *soi-disant* John. The discovery of the real character of the latter would have been to him an instant and ignominious death, and his safety was much dearer to his master than his own emancipation.

Now this John was a very likely, pleasant, and clever fellow, and for his facetious qualities, and his general pleasing deportment, was allowed a considerable degree of liberty in the Temple.

He was highly, almost extravagantly, dressed as an English jockey, and well knew how to assume the manners befitting the character. But we cannot forbear remarking, in this place, on the stolidity of the French Directory, who took a personal interest in the retention of Sir Sidney Smith, and on the stupidity of the officials whom they had selected to enforce their views. Indeed, we can only account for it on the supposition of their profound ignorance of English manners. That a buck-skinned, booted, and spurred jockey should accompany Sir Sidney Smith, and be made prisoner with him in a cutting-out expedition under the batteries of Havre, must exhibit a very singular specimen of the genus, sailor; and might well make Messeurs les Concernés, in viewing such an article, exclaim with the miserly father, in Molière's excellent comedy,

"Que le diable fait-il dans cette galère?"

But, however, not only was John so inexplicably in *cette galère,* but he was taken out of it, and, as we have seen, put in prison, and in prison he was soon completely at home. Every one was fond of him. He fraternised with the turnkeys, and made love to the governor's daughter. As the little English jockey was not supposed to have received an education the most profound, he

was compelled to study how sufficiently to mutilate and Anglicise his own mother tongue. He soon accomplished this like a clever farce-player. Indeed, he acted so well, that he almost overdid his part; for, in fraternising with the turnkeys he would sometimes get drunk with them, and in making love to the governor's daughter he promised her marriage, in which promise her faith was strong, which was very naughty in John, as he had long been a married man.

It may be said that, at this time, all the prisoners seemed as if they were acting a comedy; for John appeared very eager and attentive to his fictitious master, and always spoke to him in the most respectful manner. In return for this, Sir Sidney repeatedly scolded this jockeyfied emigrant with great unction and gravity; and so well did they both play their parts, that Sir Sidney confesses that he sometimes ceased to simulate, and found himself forgetting the friend in the master, and most seriously rating his valet soundly.

At length John's wife, Madame de T. arrived at Paris, and immediately commenced making the most uncommon exertions for the liberation of the three prisoners. She is represented to have been a most interesting lady, with a considerable share of personal beauty. She dared not, however, fearing discovery, come herself to

the Temple, but from a neighbouring house she had the satisfaction of daily beholding her husband, as he paced to and fro in the courts of the Temple—a feeling in which her captive partner fully participated.

In the attempts for Sir Sidney's liberation, it appears that the ladies always took the initiative. Madame de T. devised and communicated a plan to a sensible and courageous young person of her acquaintance, who acceded immediately to it without hesitation. This convert to the cause of our hero was also influenced, like the three Muse-named ladies, by sentiments of what he conceived to be the true patriotism, for, in giving his adhesion to the cause of the prisoners, he said to Madame de T. "I will serve Sir Sidney Smith with pleasure, because I believe that the English government intend to restore Louis XVIII. to the throne. But if the commodore is to fight against France, and not for the King of France, Heaven forbid that I should assist."

At this time, there were several agents of the emigrant king who were confined in the Temple, and to effect whose liberation a M. l'Oiseau was assiduously labouring. It was therefore proposed that all should go off together, that is to say, Sir Sidney's party and the royalist agents. One of these, a M. la Vilheurnois, being condemned to

only one year's confinement, was resolved not to entail upon himself any more evils, but quietly to remain until he should be relieved by the due course of his sentence; but the two others, Brothien and Duverne de Presle, had agreed to join in the attempt.

For some unexplained reasons, this plan completely failed, not improbably owing to the treachery or the misconduct of M. Le Presle; but of this we speak doubtingly. However, it is in these words that Sir Sidney Smith himself inculpates him: "Had our scheme succeeded, this Duverne would not, perhaps, have ceased to be an honest man; for, till then, he had conducted himself as such. His condition must now be truly deplorable, for I do not think him formed by nature for the commission of crimes."

CHAPTER X.

Another attempt to escape made by boring—The general disaffection to the Directorial Government of France—The failure of the attempt to escape—The urbanity of the jailer of the Temple—Anecdotes concerning him.

As M. C. l'Oiseau was indefatigable in making his preparations, they were soon in such a state of forwardness, that it was immediately resolved the attempt should be made. As all the arrangements seemed the best that could be adopted under existing circumstances, our gallant officer and his companions determined to follow them up to the best of their abilities.

In the cellar that adjoined the prison, it was purposed to make an excavation sufficiently wide to admit freely the passage of one person, but which it would be necessary to make twelve feet long. A Mademoiselle D——, who generously abetted these attempts, in order to mask their

operations, nobly rejecting every prudential consideration, came and resided in the apartments over this cellar, of which premises the prisoners' confederates had contrived to possess themselves, and they were consequently completely at their disposal.

As Mademoiselle D—— was young and attractive, the other lodgers in the mansion attributed to her alone the frequent visits of Charles l'Oiseau. The lovers of romantic adventure will perceive that here is plot involved within plot, and sufficient elements of confusion to form a Spanish comedy.

Everything for some time seemed to proceed favourably, and the hopes of the incarcerated rose correspondingly. No one unconnected with the scheme, residing in the house, had any suspicions of the undermining that was thus actively going forward. Miss D—— also brought with her an amiable little child, only seven years of age, who was so well tutored that, instead of betraying the secret, she was in the habit of continually beating a little drum, with which she drowned the noise made by the work of excavation.

Hitherto M. l'Oiseau had alone worked upon this hole, and, as he had now laboured a considerable time, he began to fear, very naturally, that

he had commenced and driven forward his operations much too deeply in the earth; it was therefore necessary that the wall should be sounded, and, for this purpose, an experienced mason was requisite. Madame de T. who seems, after all, to have acted as the tutelary genius of this escapade, undertook to procure one—an office as delicate as it was dangerous, in times when suspicion was so active, and death so closely attendant on suspicion. She succeeded, and not only brought him, but engaged to detain him in the cellar until all the prisoners had effected their liberation, which was to take place on that very day. No sooner was this worthy artificer conveyed into the cellar, and instructed as to the nature of his services, than he immediately perceived that he was to be made the instrument to assist some of the victims of the government. However, he proceeded without hesitation, and he only stipulated with the parties employing him in this hazardous business, that, if he were arrested, care should be taken of his poor children.

All this must strike every one, that the disaffection to the then government must have been, though secret from terror, as general, we may add, as just. Multitudes were willing to thwart its projects, or deal out to it some blow, providing there was the probability only of impunity.

It was the concealed labours of the many against the despotism of the few. In this view we cannot look upon the exertions of those thus aiding persons who had so recently been in arms against their country to escape, in the light either of traitors or unpatriotic conspirators.

The mason laboured, and found that the excavation had reached from the cellar to the wall of the garden of the Temple; but instead of finding it to be too low, it proved to be too high. The perforation of this wall commenced, and every stone was removed with the greatest precaution—but in vain! The hopes of months were frustrated in a moment! The last stones rolled outwards into the garden of the Temple, and fell at the feet of the sentinel. The alarm was sounded, the guard arrived, and, in a moment, all was discovered. Very fortunately, the friends of the prisoners had just time to escape, and not one of them was taken.

They had provided for all conjunctures, and had so well arranged their measures, that, when the commissaries of the Bureau Central came to examine the cellar and the rooms above them, they found only a few pieces of furniture, trunks filled with logs of wood and hay, and some hats decorated with the tri-coloured cockade, for the use of those who had intended their escape, as they had in their possession only black ones.

After this tantalising failure, when everything seemed so auspicious, and everything had been so admirably conducted, Sir Sidney Smith wrote to Madame de T. to console both her and her young friend. Indeed, the latter needed every sympathy, for his misery was nearly insupportable at this bitter frustration of his well-devised scheme.

Sir Sidney and his companions were in no manner depressed in spirits by this defeat, but were continually contriving some new scheme for their freedom. Defeat will only discourage weak minds; and the reader must have already discovered that there was very little of weakness in the mind of our hero. These manifold machinations did not escape the notice of the keeper; but his principal prisoner cared so little about his suspicions, that he was frequently so frank as to acknowledge that there was good cause for them.

This prince of jailers seems to have met this frankness with a corresponding openness, for he often said, "Commodore, your friends are desirous of liberating you, and they only do their duty; I also am doing mine in watching you more narrowly."

Though this keeper was a man of the sternest severity in act, yet, in manner, he never departed from the rules of civility and politeness. He

was the *preux chevalier* of jailers. He treated all his captives with as much kindness as his sense of duty permitted him to show them, and even piqued himself upon his generosity. Various and very tempting proposals were made to him, but he indignantly rejected them all, and merely responded to them by watching his charge the more closely. He had very nice notions of honour, and though he thought himself too humble himself to boast of them, he expected and respected them in others.

One day, as Sir Sidney was dining with him, this keeper perceived that his guest regarded an open window in the room with all the wistful attention of one long imprisoned. Now this window opened on the street, and the gaze gave the keeper so much uneasiness, that it highly amused the commodore. However, not wishing to give the good man who behaved so well to him too long a probation, he said to him, laughing, "I know what you are thinking of; but fear not. It is now three o'clock. I will make a truce with you till midnight; and I give you my word of honour, until that time, even were the doors open, I would not escape. When that hour is passed, my promise is at an end, and we are enemies again."

"Sir," said he, "your word is a safer bond

than my bars or bolts: till midnight, therefore, I am perfectly easy."

This tells highly for both parties—nor is this all. When they arose from table, the keeper took Sir Sidney aside, and said to him, "Commodore, the Boulevard is not far off. If you are inclined to take the air, I will conduct you thither." This proposition struck the prisoner with the utmost astonishment, as he could not conceive how this man, who, but lately, appeared so severe and so uneasy, should thus suddenly come to the resolution of making such a proposal. He accepted it, however, and, in the evening, they went out. From that time forward, this mutual confidence always continued. Whenever the distinguished prisoner was desirous to enjoy perfect liberty, a suspension of hostilities was offered until a certain time, and this was never refused by his generous enemy; but, immediately the armistice terminated, his vigilance was unremitting. Every post was scrupulously examined, and every fitful order of the Directory that, at times, he should be kept more closely, was enforced with a rigid scrupulosity.

CHAPTER XI.

The renewed rigour of Sir Sidney's confinement—M. T.'s exchange effected—The successful plan of escape devised—Is put in execution—Sir Sidney proceeds to Rouen—Arrives safely in London—His reception by his sovereign and his countrymen.

UNDER these circumstances of restraint, Sir Sidney again found himself *free* only to contrive and prepare for freedom, and the jailer again to treat him with the utmost rigour. Sir Sidney did not lack amusement. We are sadly afraid that this exquisite race of jailers is extinct. Sir Sidney Smith has himself placed upon record this man's creed of honour; we rather think that he gave his superiors too much credit. He would not have found all prisoners of rank like Sir Sidney. It was thus that he frequently addressed his captive:—"If you were under sentence of death, I would permit you to go out on

your parole, because I should be certain of your return. Many very honest prisoners, and I myself among the rest, would not return in the like case; but an officer, and especially an officer of distinction, holds his honour dearer than his life. I know this to be a fact, commodore, therefore I should be less uneasy if you desired the gates always to be open."

This was just, so far as regarded his chivalrous prisoner, but how prudent as a general maxim, let the list of parole-breakers testify. This amiable trustiness has called forth the following remark from our officer, in the accuracy of which we implicitly trust. "My keeper was right. Whilst I enjoyed my liberty, I endeavoured to lose sight of the idea of my escape; and I should have been averse to employ, for that object, means that occurred to my imagination during my hours of liberty. One day I received a letter containing matters of great importance, which I had the strongest desire immediately to read; but as the contents related to my intended deliverance, I asked leave to return to my room, and break off the truce. The keeper, however, refused, saying, with a laugh, that he wanted to take some sleep, and I accordingly postponed the perusal of my letter till the evening."

In the midst of these exchanges of courtesy and confidence, the Directory again thought proper to have Sir Sidney treated with the utmost rigour. No opportunity of flight now occurred, and the keeper punctually obeyed his orders; and he who, on the previous evening had granted him the greatest liberty, now doubled the guards in order to exercise the greatest vigilance. Cessations of hostilities were at end, promenades on the Boulevards to be enjoyed only in the imagination.

Among the prisoners was a man condemned for certain political offences to ten years' confinement, and who was suspected by the other prisoners of acting in the detestable character of a spy on his companions. These suspicions Sir Sidney thought well founded, and therefore experienced the greatest anxiety on account of his disguised friend, John the jockey. From these fears he was relieved, for he was so fortunate as, soon after, to obtain John's liberty. An exchange of prisoners being about to take place, our officer was able to obtain for him that which was pertinaciously and unjustly refused to himself, getting his supposed servant included in the cartel: had the shadow of a suspicion existed of his real character, he would have been most assuredly de-

tained; yet, luckily, no difficulty arose, and he was liberated. When the day of his departure arrived, this kind and affectionate friend could scarcely be prevailed upon to leave his benefactor and protector, and it was long before he yielded to the most urgent entreaties. They parted with tears, which were those of unfeigned pleasure on the part of Sir Sidney, seeing that his friend was leaving a situation of the greatest danger.

In the whole of this part of the transaction there is much that is truly comic. The amiable jockey was regretted by every one. The turnkeys' hearts softened, and their lips opened, for they heartily and piously drank a good journey to him. The girl he had been courting wept bitterly for his departure, whilst her good mother, who thought John a very hopeful youth, felt fully assured that, one day, she should call him her son-in-law. In the midst of all these ludicrous ambiguities, we must say that there was a little dash of needless cruelty in the deception practised on the confiding girl; but we must wait for the march of improvement extending still farther, before the softer sex are *fully* included in man's laws of honour.

Sir Sidney had soon the extreme satisfaction

to learn that his friend had safely arrived in London, and the knowledge of his safety made his own captivity the more endurable.

The commodore would also willingly have effected the exchange of his secretary, but that estimable gentleman was opposed to all mention of it, as he would have looked upon it as an infraction of that friendship of which he had given so many proofs. His principal did not very forcibly press the matter, as he, unlike Mr. De T., had no other dangers to apprehend than those that were common to all prisoners of war.

On the 18th Fructidor of republican France, the 4th of September of Christianity, for some reasons never fully understood, the rigour of Sir Sidney's confinement was still further increased. That paragon of jailers, with whom we have become so well acquainted, and whose name, which ought to be immortalised, was Lasne, was suddenly displaced, and his successor immediately made the commodore actually a close prisoner. Thus were Sir Sidney's hopes of a peace, which had just then been much talked of, and of his own release, crushed together. He now saw in this wanton severity a demonstration in the Directory of the most hostile character to the English nation, and a new barrier to future ac-

commodation thrown up by this cruel treatment of distinguished English subjects.

But, amidst all these present adversities and gloomy apprehensions for the future, another proposal was made to the gallant captive, which, as a last resource, he was resolved to accept. The plan was simple, and could not but be effective, if wisely conducted. It was merely, by properly forged official documents, to order the removal of the prisoner to another place of confinement, and, in the supposititious transit, to convey him first to a place of safety, from whence he might ultimately make his escape. A French gentleman, enthusiastically attached to the royal cause, a M. de Phélypeaux, whom the reader will again meet in these Memoirs, was the author of this scheme. As he was a gentleman not only distinguished by generosity, but by acumen in judgment and activity in conduct, the execution of the project was cheerfully confided to him. The order for removal having been accurately imitated, and, by means of a bribe, the real stamp of the minister's signature having been procured, nothing remained but to find men bold and trustworthy enough to simulate the necessary characters that should be employed to effect the removal. Mr. Phélypeaux and Charles l'Oiseau would have eagerly undertaken this part

of the stratagem also, but both being well known, and even notorious at the Temple, it was absolutely necessary to employ others. Messrs B—— and L—— therefore, both persons of tried courage, accepted the office with pleasure and alacrity.

With this forged order they boldly came to the Temple, M. B—— in the disguise of an adjutant, and M. L—— as an officer. They presented their order, which the keeper having perused, and of which he carefully examined the seal and the minister's signature, he went into another room, leaving the two gentlemen in the most cruel suspense. After a considerable time, which anxiety increased into hours, he returned, accompanied by the gréffier or register of the prison, and ordered Sir Sidney to be sent for. When the gréffier informed the prisoner of the order of the Directory, Sir Sidney pretended to be much concerned at it, as it appeared to him to argue further persecutions on their part. Hearing this, the adjutant assured him in the most serious manner, that "the government were very far from intending to aggravate his misfortunes, and that he would be very comfortable in the place to which he was ordered to conduct him." After this farcical exhibition, the commodore expressed

his gratitude to all the servants employed about the prison, and then, with a very commendable despatch, he commenced packing up his clothes.

On his return, all ready for the approaching liberty, the gréffier remarked that, at least six men from the guard must accompany the prisoner; with which precaution the *soi-disant* adjutant coincided, and, without the least appearance of confusion, ordered them immediately to be called out. No sooner, however, had he given these orders, than he seemed, on a sudden, to have called to his mind the law of chivalry and of honour; so turning abruptly to Sir Sidney, he thus addressed him: "Commodore, you are an officer—I am an officer also. Your parole will be sufficient. Give me but that, and I have no need of an escort."

"Sir," replied the prisoner, "if that is sufficient, I swear on the faith of an officer to accompany you wherever you choose to conduct me."

Every one applauded these noble sentiments; and the only hardship that Sir Sidney felt in doing them sufficient justice, was in the difficulty that he found in suppressing his laughter. The keeper now asked for a discharge, and the gréffier,

handing the book to M. B——, he boldly signed it, with an imposing flourish, "L'Oger, adjutant-general."

During these proceedings, Sir Sidney occupied the attention of the turnkeys with praises for their politeness and urbanity, and loaded them with favours, in order that they might have no leisure for reflection. The precaution seemed to be wholly needless, as they appeared to be thinking of nothing but their own advantage.

At last these tedious ceremonies were ended, and the gréffier and the governor accompanied the party as far as the second court; and their suspense was nearly at an end when they found the external gate opened to them, through which, after a tantalising exchange of punctilio and politeness, they finally and joyfully passed, and had the extreme consolation of hearing it bolted behind them.

They instantly entered a hackney coach, and the adjutant ordered the coachman to drive to the suburb of St. Germain. But this fellow, either from his natural stupidity, or from some little plot of extortion, drove his vehicle, before he had proceeded one hundred yards, against a post, broke his wheel, and injured an unfortunate passenger. This *contre-tems* immediately collected a demonstration of the sovereign people

in the shape of an angry crowd, who were exasperated at the injury the poor fellow had sustained from the misconduct of the coachman. The mob, at this time, was not to be despised; so Sir Sidney and his friends, taking their portmanteaus in their hands, went off in an instant.

Though they were much noticed by the people, the mob, for once, acted justly, confining themselves to the office of abusing the coachman. Notwithstanding this fracas, before the party could make off, the driver became clamorous for his fare, when W——, through an inadvertency that might have compromised the safety of them all, gave the fellow a double *louis d'or*. Luckily this had no ill effects.

Directly that they quitted the carriage, they separated, and Sir Sidney Smith arrived at the rendezvous, accompanied only by his secretary and M. Phélypeaux, the last-mentioned gentleman having joined them near the prison. Though our officer was most anxious to wait for his two friends, in order to thank and to take his leave of them, M. de Phélypeaux maintained that there was not a moment to be lost. He was, therefore, obliged to defer the expression of his gratitude until fortune should offer him a better opportunity, and they immediately de-

parted for Rouen, at which place a gentleman had made every preparation for their reception.

At Rouen, they were obliged to remain several days; but as their passports were perfectly regular, they did not take much care to conceal themselves, for in the evenings they walked about the town, or took the air on the banks of the Seine. Finally, everything having been prepared for their crossing the Channel, they quitted Rouen and reached Havre, from whence they embarked in an open boat, and were picked up by the Argo, 44, Captain Bower, and landed at Portsmouth; and, without encountering any further danger, Sir Sidney arrived in London with his secretary, as well as with M. de Phélypeaux, who could not prevail on himself to leave them.

During our hero's captivity in the Temple, Mrs. Cosway, a well-known artist of the day, and who afterwards published a poem in four cantos, entitled "the Siege of Acre," contrived to obtain a sight of Sir Sidney from a window or by some other means, and made a sketch of him as he sat by the bars of his prison. The head was in profile, and bore some resemblance to the original, but the features are of too haggard a contour to be acknowledged as an accurate likeness. The extraordinary thinness of the figure may be

accounted for, by the effect of two years' confinement, during which he was overwhelmed with every indignity that oppression could lay upon the subject of its displeasure.

The above is the substance of a quotation from a very valuable publication, but it says too much. It appears, by the foregoing narrative, that Sir Sidney had, during the greater part of his imprisonment, free intercourse with his friends, an unrestricted correspondence, and, at intervals, much personal liberty. That he suffered, at times, most of the miseries of captivity, is certain, but never to the extent of bringing upon him the extreme incarceration for which the author of this paragraph would solicit our pity. Mrs. Cosway, her picture and her poem, are almost totally forgotten, though her subject is so worthy of immortality; and we have only mentioned this fact, in order to show the intense interest which everything connected with Sir Sidney Smith excited at the time.

It was in May, 1798, that Sir Sidney so unexpectedly arrived in London, where he was welcomed by the universal congratulations of the people. So rigid had been the care with which he had been confined, and knowing the value that the French Directory placed upon the boast of having the most active commodore in the English

service in their prison, his arrival was looked upon, in some measure, as a miracle, which, at first, but few could prevail upon themselves to believe. We need not state, that he immediately became the first lion of the day.

His sovereign took the lead in these demonstrations of interest, and received him with the warmest affection, and showed in what estimation he held him, not only by his behaviour on his public presentation, but by honouring him with an immediate and private interview at Buckingham-house.

That these demonstrations were more than the offspring of policy, may be proved by the interest that his Majesty took for his officer's liberation, before he effected it so cleverly for himself. He had permitted M. Bergeret, the captain of the Virginie French frigate, which had been captured by Sir Edward Pellew, to go to France and endeavour to negotiate an exchange between Sir Sidney and himself; but, as we have before seen, being unable to succeed, he very honourably returned to England. The King, to give the French Directory a lesson in generosity, commanded his Secretary of State to write to M. Bergeret, to inform him, that, as the object of his mission to his own country was now obtained, his Majesty was graciously pleased, seeing the trouble to

which he had been put, and as a mark of satisfaction which his conduct had afforded him, to restore him to liberty, and permitted him to return to his country without any restriction whatever.

CHAPTER XII.

Sir Sidney appointed to the command of the Tigre—Made joint Plenipotentiary to the Turkish Court—Arrives at Constantinople—His appointment gives umbrage to Earl St. Vincent.

We are now approaching the most brilliant epoch of Sir Sidney's martial career. It was necessary on the part of the English government to do all that lay in their power to oppose the aggrandising principles and the propaganding spirit of the French republic. That republic would fain have had but one nation in Europe, and that nation the French, but with many thrones and many kings at Paris. Had these visionary schemes succeeded, the civilised world might have been excellently ruled by the departmental demagogues assembled in the French metropolis; but every man out of France, who prized his nationality, and felt an honest glow at the simple

words, " My country !" was ready to arm and to die in opposing this generalising and regenerating system.

After much diplomacy and infinite trouble, the obtuse Turk was made to see that if the republican power were not efficiently opposed, shortly everything within its scope would be French in name, and the subject and the slave to democrat France in reality. With all his faults, the Turk is obstinately national. He prepared to fight for what the new philosophy deemed a foolish prejudice.

In the September of 1798, the Sublime Porte began to show unequivocal symptoms of having awakened to a proper sense of his own position, and to the interests of the nation entrusted to his government. His new political feelings were energetically developed by a vigorous measure of reprisal against all the persons and property of the French that could be discovered in his dominions, and by fulminating a manifesto of extraordinary bitterness against the self-constituted government established in Paris.

This welcome display on the part of the Ottoman Porte caused the most active preparations in London for the speedy conclusion of a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, between Great Britain and Turkey. The more effectually to

bring this measure to a happy maturity, the British government resolved to bestow a ministerial character upon the English officer destined to the difficult task of associating and co-operating with the Turkish fleets and armies. The choice of the person to fulfil this character, at once so delicate and so arduous, naturally and very justly fell upon Sir William Sidney Smith; and he was accordingly included in the especial full powers as joint plenipotentiary with, and despatched to, the British minister then residing at Constantinople. Sir Sidney had been appointed, on the 2nd of July, 1798, to the command of the Tigre of eighty guns; and in that ship he sailed on his honourable mission from Portsmouth, on the 29th of October of the same year. This service was peculiarly grateful to our officer, as his brother was, at that time, the English envoy to the Ottoman Porte.

On the 5th of January, 1799, he had a conference with the Reis Effendi, at which was present Mr. Spencer Smith, the English ambassador. Among the presents destined for the Grand Seignior, and which Sir Sidney Smith was charged to present, were a perfect model of the Royal George, and twelve brass field-pieces, three-pounders with their caissons so constructed as to be portable on camels.

On the 11th he took up his residence at the beautiful palace of Bailes, in which the ambassadors of the Venetian republic formerly lived. He was accompanied by several military and naval officers, some French emigrants, and a guard of marines. He was received by the Ottoman court with all the distinction due to a foreigner in a public character.

The expediency of appointing naval and military officers to diplomatic functions has been often called into question. We not only think it often expedient, but also highly beneficial. In all negociations, the principal staple should be a singleness of purpose and an unswerving honesty. In all matters of treaty, the parties must have some definite object. To carry out this object, determination, good sense, and honesty are alone necessary. These are always acquired in the naval and military services; they are too seldom found, and if once possessed, too often lost, amidst the suppleness and chicanery of a court, and the amusing tortuosities of diplomacy. Special pleading is not natural to the English character; but an Englishman knows both what is due to him, and what he wants; and he has invariably found that the worst method for him to obtain these, is by the negociation of those educated to negociate, who have generally finessed away all

their notions of integrity, and protocolled themselves out of their powers of perception of right and wrong. Need we cite instances, now going on before our eyes, of this melancholy truth? Whatever may have been the faults of the Tory administration, they evinced both good sense and vigour in the frequent employment of naval and military characters in diplomatic offices, and never more so than in the nomination of Sir William Sidney Smith to be joint plenipotentiary to the Ottoman Porte.

This appointment of Sir Sidney's gave, however, great umbrage in several eminent and influential quarters. There is but little doubt but that the already justly-acquired celebrity and the increasing renown of Sir Sidney had that influence upon human feeling which signal success will always have upon even the best of us. We have it upon an authority that it would be treason in literature to doubt, that Sir Sidney's appointment to a separate command in the Mediterranean was more than distasteful, even an annoyance, to Earl St. Vincent, and more especially so to Lord Nelson.

"The Quarterly Review," for October 1838, states distinctly that, owing to a little ambiguity in the orders of the Admiralty in appointing Sir Sidney Smith to serve under Lord Nelson en-

tirely, Lord St. Vincent was overlooked; but he too well knew the rules of the service to let Sir Sidney slip through his hands. All his anxiety was respecting the feelings of Nelson. On this subject he thus wrote to Lord Spencer from Gibraltar.

"An arrogant letter, written by Sir Sidney Smith to Sir William Hamilton, when he joined the squadron forming the blockade off Malta, has wounded Rear-Admiral Nelson to the quick, (as per enclosed,) which compels me to put this strange man immediately under his lordship's orders, as the King may be deprived of his (Lord Nelson's) valuable services, as superior to Sir Sidney Smith at all times as he is to ordinary men. I experienced a trait of the presumptuous character of this young man during his short stay at Gibraltar, which I passed over, that it might not appear that I was governed by prejudice in my conduct towards him."

This is a severe sentence passed upon our hero; but we really cannot help thinking that the disclaimer of prejudice, so energetically put forward, was rather premature. The bitterness with which he styled the hero of Acre this young man does not speak highly of the gallant old Earl's utter

freedom from prejudice. We wish, for the sake of his own reputation, that he had not made use of this waspish expression; but it must not be too much dwelt upon, considering the vast merits and the eminent services of the veteran commander.

There was always something peculiar in the manner of Sir Sidney Smith—a peculiarity that, with the malevolent, would admit of a very wide construction:—that it often found a very ungenerous one, is lamentably but too true. Without meaning anything that approaches to disparagement in reference to the manners of Sir Sidney's cotemporary brother officers, we are bound to state that, from his infancy, he had much of the deportment of the courtier in his carriage, and a little of the *petit-maître* in his appearance. He had had already, at a very early age, great success—he was ardent in his imagination, and fluent in his speech. These are sometimes dangerous gifts. They are too often great betrayers—leading to a promptitude of action, and a recklessness of expression, that the very sober-minded may often deem an approximation to incipient insanity. We thus find Earl St. Vincent, in his well-disciplined mind, suspicious of Sir Sidney Smith's conduct, and designating him as "a strange man." That he appeared, at times,

strange, is as undoubtedly true as that he sometimes did strange things—but this strangeness led to very glorious consequences.

The good old admiral goes on to remark:—

"I even, in fact, had good reason to be dissatisfied with Sir Sidney Smith, who is *stated* 'to have commenced his command before Alexandria by counteracting the system laid down by his lordship,' and which always," says Earl St. Vincent, "appeared to me fraught with the most consummate wisdom;" and he adds, "my only apprehension is, that Sidney Smith, enveloped in the importance of his ambassadorial character, will not attend to the *practical* part of his military profession."

May we be permitted to remark, that this borders nearly upon the ungenerous? Why found an imputation so injurious upon a mere *ex parte* and unproved statement? But the sequel is the best refutation to this attack. Sir Sidney did not, "enveloped in the importance of his ambassadorial character," omit "to attend to the practical part of his military profession." Lord Nelson's system must, undoubtedly, have been good, because it was Lord Nelson's; but that Sir Sidney Smith's could not have been bad, we have the best and most popular of all testimonies to prove—success.

Again, Earl St. Vincent, in the following abstract of a letter to Nelson, complains, for the first time, of his health, and cause of dissatisfaction from home.

"I am not well, and have great cause for dissatisfaction from higher quarters. He (Sir Sidney Smith) has no authority whatever to wear a distinguishing pennant, unless you authorise him, for *I* certainly shall not. Your lordship will therefore exercise your discretion on this subject, and every other within the limits of your command. I have sent a copy of the orders you have judged expedient to give Sir Sidney Smith (which I highly approve of) to Lord Spencer, with my remarks; for I foresee that both you and I shall be drawn into a tracasserie about this *gentleman*, who, having the ear of *ministers, and telling* his story better than we can, will be more attended to."

We do not like this. It is petulant and womanly. Down with the miserable stripe of bunting in an open and seaman-like manner; if it be an assumption on the part of Sir Sidney, down with it—but let us have no pining at or whining about it.

But this, we are sorry to say, appears to us to

be of a piece with the sneer upon his being *the gentleman.* Do those, who really are gentlemen, ever attempt to convey a taunt by imputing to another the fact that he is a gentleman? If this be used by the Earl as a term of reproach, what then must he himself have been? If it was meant as a sarcasm, it is a sarcasm of a most villanous taste, and decidedly as wanting in point as it is in good-nature.

But then Sir Sidney had "the ear of the minister," and could tell his own story better than either Earl St. Vincent or Lord Nelson. It is distressing to see two renowned leaders drivelling about this. He could not tell his story better than either the hero of the Nile or of the Cape. When he had a good tale, it told itself well; but, in his despatches, we do not find any very alarming bursts of eloquence. They are decidedly less forcible and elegant than we should expect from such a man.

And shortly after, in another letter, he says—

"I fancy ministers at home disapprove of Sir Sidney Smith's conduct at Constantinople; for, in a confidential letter to me, a remark is made, that our new allies have not much reason to be satisfied with it. The man's head is completely turned with vanity and self-importance."

The "Quarterly Review" thus makes the "*amende*" for what we think something too severe in its remarks upon the bearing of our officer.

"With all Sir Sidney's faults, however, the memorable defence of Acre, with small means, against the overwhelming force of Bonaparte, entitles him to the gratitude of the British nation, and will, if our annals speak true, immortalise his name.

"Of this we are assured, whether the annals of our country be true or false, (for not on their veracity but on their duration the matter depends,) his fame will be equally lasting with that of the proudest of our heroes. So intimately is Sir Sidney Smith's name associated with the glory of the country, that, among naval men, whenever the names of Howe, Duncan, or Nelson, have been mentioned with enthusiasm, the peroration has always been the praise of our officer. We may safely say that in the cockpit he is idolised, an especial favourite in the gunroom, and in the cabin deeply respected. The very chivalry of his character, which makes him, in the eyes of the young and ardent, the object of their deep admiration, will always be a matter of suspicion to the old, the wily, and the shrewd politician.

"For ourselves, highly as he stands in our estimation, we do not think that it ever was advisable to have entrusted him with the sole command of armaments so extensive, that a failure would turn the tide of success of a whole war against us, or place the nation in peril. His character was formed for the detached and the brilliant. It appears that success or failure was always, to him, an object secondary to that of exciting astonishment, or gaining glory."

Sir Sidney was already most favourably known to the Turks; for, when he was with them before, he had brought out with him a clever architect, a Mr. Spurnham, and fifteen able shipwrights. These superintended and assisted at the building of several fine Turkish vessels; and in one year, that of 1798, they were thus enabled, with many smaller vessels, to construct a three-decker and another line-of-battle ship of eighty-four guns, which, in Sir Sidney Smith's official mission, by the assistance of the crew of the Tigre, they were enabled to launch and fully equip for service. These vessels afterwards formed a part of Sir Sidney's squadron.

During the whole time that the Turkish ships were serving with the English, there were placed on board the former, petty officers and some experienced seamen to instruct the Osmanlie crew

how to work them; and thus assisted, they did no discredit to their generous allies in their various maritime manœuvres.

Now, during the interval of Nelson's glorious victory of the Nile, and the arrival of Sir Sidney Smith on the Syrian coast, Bonaparte had almost entirely subjugated Egypt, and had already commenced a well-conceived plan of colonisation and organisation of his own important conquest. His promptitude and talent for the administration of the internal affairs of a kingdom, so extraordinary as that of Egypt, cannot be too highly eulogised. Already had he established so much order and regularity among these new subjects to the French, and established in these dominions so many military resources, that he conceived himself enabled to lead on his army, and to endeavour to subdue the contiguous provinces to the East. His troops were fully prepared for the expedition. By this demonstration he threatened the subjugation of the remaining Turkish provinces in that quarter, and was even enabled to give us some alarm, though completely unfounded, for our invaluable British establishments in India. Though much of the apprehensions excited by the brilliant success and rapid movements of the French leader were totally baseless, yet the policy would have been a very weak one, had the con-

federated powers not sought means to check his progress, and to destroy the moral effect produced upon the inhabitants of the East by his victorious career. Very great exertions were accordingly made on the part of the Sublime Porte, and their new allies, the English, to arrest the course and counteract the designs of the future Emperor of the French.

Deeply impressed with this community of interests, preparations were made throughout Syria for military resistance to the march of the French by the Ghezzar Pasha, who was to be still further supported by an army which was to form a junction with him, by traversing Asia Minor. It was supposed that this force would be sufficiently strong to warrant the experiment of an attack on the frontier of Egypt, without waiting for the advance of the French. This demonstration was to have been supported by a powerful diversion towards the mouths of the Nile, and made still more effective by the operations of a strong corps under Murad Bey.

CHAPTER XIII.

Preparations for the defence of Acre—Mention of Captain Wright—Anecdote of the King of Sweden's diamond ring—The French move towards Acre—Lose their battering-train.

THIS plan of operations was well arranged, but the Turks had not sufficiently advanced in military science to act upon extensive combinations. All these preparations, for a time, proved futile when opposed to the well-considered tactics of Bonaparte. That consummate general, having obtained intelligence that the arrival at the Ottoman court of Commodore Sir William Sidney Smith would be the signal for the commencement of these too widely diffused operations, determined not to wait for the combined movement, but to act, at once, against a part of the force to be employed against him. He therefore determined to commence offensive operations against

the Pasha. The French forces destined for this expedition amounted to about thirteen thousand men. The face of the country being entirely impracticable for artillery, the republican general had no other means of conveying it to the destined scene of operations but by sea. He therefore shipped his train at Alexandria. Rear Admiral Perrée was sent with three frigates to convoy the flotilla, having orders afterwards to cruise off Jaffa. It may not be here out of place to state that this town, Jaffa, had been stormed and taken by the French on the preceding 7th March, on which occasion the whole of the Turkish garrison was put to the sword. The conquest was not worth the cost. In the assault the French lost above twelve hundred of the *élite* of their army. To show also the desperate policy and the extraordinary lengths to which Bonaparte would sometimes proceed, he announced that in this expedition to Palestine he purposed to take possession of Jerusalem, rebuild the Temple, restore the Jews, and thus disprove the prophecies of the divine Founder of the christian religion. But it must be remembered, in order to vindicate such boasting from the imputation of insanity, that, at that time, infidelity was the road to Gallic power, and the revilement of Christianity not unpleasing to his newly-acquired subjects.

After this digression, we must hasten to return to our commodore, and narrate the progress of the operations in which he was so materially concerned. Being apprised of the enemy's intentions, he left the Turkish capital, in the Tigre, on 19th February, 1799, and after making several needful arrangements with Hassan Bey, the Ottoman governor of Rhodes, who happened to be an old sea-captain, he sailed from that island, and arrived off Alexandria on the 3d of March. He here found in command Captain Trowbridge, whom he immediately relieved, and then despatched his friend and second lieutenant, Lieutenant Wright, to St. Jean d'Acre, to decide, with its commander, upon the necessary measures for the obstinate defence of that fortress.

We will take this opportunity of mentioning, that this brave officer, Wright, who honoured and was honoured with the friendship of Sir Sidney, was as unfortunate as he was brave. In the subsequent gallant and glorious defence of Acre, to which we shall shortly refer, he received a severe and dangerous wound, and was afterwards promoted to the rank of commander. Just as the great prizes of his profession seemed to be soliciting his grasp, he had the mortification of being made prisoner by the French, and died in that situation after a protracted, rigorous, and

cruel confinement. For these harsh measures the French authorities have some palliation in the very suspicious service on which he was employed when captured. At one time, it was generally supposed that he was assassinated, whilst in prison, by the orders of Bonaparte. This, however, turns out to be a malicious calumny. It proves, however, the value that public opinion placed upon Wright; for to be thought the object of personal fear to a man like Bonaparte is no mean commendation. His old friend and commander has given proof of his esteem, for he has, since the peace, caused a handsome monument to be erected to his memory at that Paris which was so long the scene of their mutual sufferings.

This gives us occasion to relate an anecdote of a very humble individual, connected with the fate of poor Wright, and alike elucidatory of the character of Sir Sidney. This anecdote, trivial as it may appear to the superciliously grave, ought not to be undervalued, since it affords us the enviable opportunity of placing upon record a single effort of our enterprising commodore to conciliate the Muses—an effort that possesses one most excellent quality, not usually met with in the poetical effusions of the day, yet no less to be desired—it is brevity.

When Wright received his severe wound, it

was reported to Sir Sidney that he was actually killed. The commodore's grief was excessive, and when, immediately after, Colonel Douglas, of the royal marines, reported the successful springing of a mine that had destroyed a vast number of the enemy, Sir Sidney's principal thought was about his old companion and tried friend, Wright. "Let the French," &c. &c., was Sir Sidney's reply; "but if you love me, and it be possible, bring in the body of poor Wright."

The colonel immediately called to one of his men, a gigantic, red-haired, Irish marine, who, by some singular means, had contrived to get himself named James Close. Pointing to the mass of carnage that lay sweltering in the ditch below, where the slightly wounded and the actually dying were fast hastening into mutual corruption under the burning sun, "the colonel said, "Close, dare you go there, and bring us the body of poor Wright?"

"What darn't I do, yer honour?" was the immediate reply, and exposed to the musketry of the enemy, wading through blood, and stumbling over dead bodies and scattered limbs, he, unhurt, at length found Wright, not killed, but only wounded, and he brought him away safely from these shambles of death and the plague. The French spared him for the sake of the heroism of the act.

The rescue was complete, for Close conveyed him to the hospital, where he soon completely recovered, to find, not long after, a less honoured death.

This intrepid conduct brought the marine into especial favour with Sir Sidney, and had his education but have warranted promotion, his advancement would have been rapid. The commodore did for him all that he could; he exempted him from the wearying routine of a private's duty, and made him his orderly, thus limiting his services to a mere personal attendance on Sir Sidney.

It would seem that James Close was not so great a hero in resisting the temptation of a naval life, grog, and the illegal means of obtaining it, as he was fearless of the enemy, and great in the field. Indeed, it requires a most amiable believer in the intuitive integrity of our species, not to pronounce that, for a little peccadillo or so, he deserved to be hung; but of this we cannot judge, as the truth of the matter will ever remain in the deepest mystery.

Our gallant hero—not James Close, but his commander-in-chief—had received from the King of Sweden a beautiful and very valuable diamond ring, and which, amongst other jewellery, and with his orders, he always wore on state occasions. At a grand dinner given at the

monastery at Acre, and at which all the superior officers of both the English and Turkish service were present, with every other civilian of note, that part of the ornaments that consisted of Sir Sidney Smith's rings was lost. He was in the habit, just before he washed his hands after dining, to take from off his hands his *bijouterie*, and place the trinkets under the tablecloth—a very provident plan, when the guests happen to be numerous and miscellaneous. This custom he put in practice on this day, but unfortunately, when he rose from the table, he totally forgot the treasure that he had left beneath the tablecloth, and retired as happy as if his fingers had displayed their wonted effulgence.

It was usual, on these high occasions, for Sir Sidney Smith's bodyguard, consisting of a party of the royal marines, to place themselves at the vacated table, when the guests had withdrawn, and finish the fare provided for their superiors—a munificent regulation, highly creditable to Sir Sidney.

On this day, the custom was honoured, not by the breach, but the observance; for not only did the fragments of the feast disappear, but the rings also, as, shortly after the viands were consumed, Sir Sidney missed his ornaments, and a strict but ineffectual search ensued.

The Greeks have a bad character, and on this occasion they received the full benefit of it, as it was supposed that the attending descendants of Homer's heroes had made to themselves the lucky appropriation; and being Greeks, the English very wisely deemed that search would be fruitless, and recovery hopeless.

For two years the stigma lay with the Athenians, when, in 1801, the marines disembarked from the Tigre to assist Abercromby in his operations. After the action of the 13th of March, it fell to the duty of these marines narrowly to invest the Castle of Aboukir. One day, four of these marines, (we do not know why posterity should not be acquainted with their names,) Clark, Stanton, West, and *James Close*, were taking their ease in their hut, which an envious shot from the castle disturbed, by killing Clark and Stanton, and thus naturally causing the two survivors narrowly to search, as is the laudable custom on such occasions, the dead bodies of their comrades. Among other good things that they possessed, there were found in Stanton's pockets (at least Close said so) two rings, of which the said Close took particular care.

Some little time after, Close was again ordered on shore on military duty, and he then entrusted these rings to the care of another of his com-

rades, named Connor—Close, thinking this Connor to be a particularly steady man, and consequently that they would be more safe in his keeping, on board, than in his own, on shore.

In order to do full justice to this opinion, Connor goes on board on the same day, and very carefully gets gloriously drunk, and "appetite increasing by what it fed on," that is to say, the act of drinking making him much athirst for more, he sells the heaviest of the rings, the veritable King of Sweden, for a mere thimbleful of the poison, to his messmate, who, having the spirit of barter strongly upon him, sells it again to Sir Sidney Smith's steward for the enormous value of half a gallon of bad wine. The steward immediately recognised it as the great diamond, "the right royal Gustavus," as Sir Sidney was wont to call it, and of whose majesty no tidings had been heard for two years.

Investigation immediately followed discovery, and it was speedily traced up to James Close, who was sent on board and interrogated strictly. Of course, he laid the primal theft at the door of the departed, well knowing and acting upon the proverb, that "dead men tell no tales," at least on this side of the grave. It was never known exactly what degree of credence Sir Sidney gave to this account; but as it was certain that even dead

men ought not to be robbed, James Close stood within the terrors of the law, and, consequently, Close found himself immediately in close custody.

The officers of the Tigre endeavoured to prevail upon their commander to bring the prisoner to a trial by court-martial, but his heroic conduct towards Captain Wright operated strongly in his favour; so after a few days' confinement Sir Sidney sent for him on deck, and ordering him to be released, thus addressed him:

> "You're Close by name, and Close in every thing,
> And Close you've kept, O Close, my diamond ring."

It was very fortunate for the culprit that his captain was more in the rhyming than the flogging vein; for we think it not unlikely that the fecundity of Sir Sidney's head saved the marine's back. However, the lines were looked upon as a monument of poetical genius, and the distich stuck as closely to poor Close as any punster of a reasonable good-nature could have wished.

As faithful chroniclers of the events connected with these Memoirs, we feel bound to state the general impression among the officers and seamen of the English squadron respecting the real character of Wright. Before Sir Sidney commenced his renowned defence of Acre, Wright was the second lieutenant of the Tigre. It is well known

that he was landed by Sir Sidney Smith, in his own barge, at a short distance from Alexandria, in the night-time, not openly as a British naval officer, but bearded, moustachioed, and shawled *à la Turque*, and for the express purpose of obtaining valuable information. Conscious of the dubiety of his mission, on stepping on shore he thus addressed the boat's crew: "Men, beware of your words! I am going to serve my king and country, if, by the help of God, I can." Then turning to his commander, he exclaimed, "Sir Sidney, do not forget the boat's crew."

The vulgar belief may have been erroneous, but it was asserted that he was constantly employed by Sir Sidney as a spy, and the fact was neither concealed nor denied on board the Tigre.

But to resume. Sir Sidney, after bombarding Alexandria in the vain hope of arresting the march of Bonaparte towards Acre, which was not then sufficiently strengthened to stand a siege, sailed for that devoted place, off which he anchored on the 15th of March. He immediately landed, and proceeded to inspect the fortifications. These he found in a dilapidated and most ruinous state, and almost destitute of artillery. Making the best arrangements that the shortness of the time until the attack would be expected, and the paucity of the materials for a defence permitted, on

the 17th of March the commodore again put to sea in the Tigre's boats, and proceeded to the anchorage of Khaiffa, in order to intercept that portion of the French expedition which would take its route along the sea-coast, and which Sir Sidney was convinced must necessarily soon make its appearance. His anticipations were correct, for, at ten o'clock on the same night, he discovered the approach of the enemy's advanced guard, moving leisurely forward by the sea-side. They were mounted upon asses and dromedaries, and offered a novel and somewhat grotesque spectacle. Having thus satisfied himself as to their actual approach, the commodore, with all haste, returned on board the Tigre, from which ship he immediately despatched Lieutenant Bushby, in a gunboat, to the mouth of a small river (the brook Kishon of the Scriptures) that flows into the bay of Acre. He had strict orders to defend the ford across this little stream to the utmost, and by no means to suffer the French to advance by this way on the town.

At the break of day, this intelligent officer admirably worked out his commander's intentions. This curiously mounted advanced guard had, unexpectedly, so vigorous and so destructive a fire opened upon them, that they were driven, in great confusion, both from the shore

and the ford, and great was the overthrow of men, as well as of dromedaries and asses. Indeed, a tumultuous dispersion of the whole force ensued, and was scattered on the skirts of Mount Carmel.

Taught by this repulse, the main body of the French army avoided carefully this pernicious and gunboat-guarded ford, and, to escape a similar attack, were obliged to make a large circuit, and advance upon Acre by the road of Nazareth. This they did without much difficulty, for they soon drove in the Turkish outposts, and encamped upon an insulated eminence skirting the sea, upon a parallel direction with the town, and about one thousand toises distant from it. As this elevation extended to the northward as far as Cape Blanc, it commanded a plain to the westward of seven miles in length, and which plain is terminated by the mountains that lie between St. Jean d'Acre and the river Jordan. This position of the republican forces was as commanding and as good as could be well desired. Favoured by the shelter afforded them by the outlying gardens, the unfilled ditches of the old town, and an aqueduct that adjoined to the glacis, they opened their trenches against the crumbling works of the town on the 20th, and at no greater distance than one hundred and fifty toises.

We have here again to make a cursory mention of a very brave and clever loyalist, M. Phélypeaux, who had been in the service of Louis XVI. as an engineer. He was skilful in his profession, and in his private capacity a very worthy man. Though, at this time, still young, he had been involved in many extraordinary adventures, having served in all the campaigns of the army of Condé. He commanded at Berri, and was taken, and only escaped an ignominious death by breaking out from a state-prison. As we have before narrated, he accompanied Sir Sidney to England, at the time the latter made his escape from the custody of the French Directory. The strictest friendship, founded upon mutual esteem, subsisted between M. Phélypeaux and our hero, and he accompanied him as a volunteer in this Syrian expedition, and proved of infinite service by materially strengthening the works of this miserable place, which was so shortly afterwards to prove his tomb, as he died there on the 2nd of May following.

This experienced engineer officer was materially assisted by Captain Miller* of the Theseus,

* Captain Ralph Willet Miller was made post-captain in 1796, and commanded the Captain seventy-four, bearing the broad pennant of Commodore Nelson, in the action off Cape St. Vincent, 14th February, 1797. He was afterwards ap-

who furnished guns and ammunition to the utmost of his power.

But it seems that all this display of skill and activity would have proved inefficient against the skill and bravery that supported the attacks of the French, had not their vessels, having on board the greater part of their battering-train and ammunition, fallen into our hands. We have before mentioned that this artillery had been ordered round by sea by Bonaparte, from Alexandria, under the command of Rear-Admiral Perée. This flotilla was just rounding Cape Carmel, when it was discovered by the Tigre, pursued, and overtaken.

The capture was not so complete as could have been wished. The protecting force consisted of a corvette and nine gunboats. Two of these and the corvette, containing Bonaparte's personal property, escaped. Seven gun-vessels, mounting altogether thirty-four guns, and con-

pointed to the Theseus seventy-four, which ship he commanded at the battle of the Nile. After having been three days off Jaffa, whither he was despatched by Sir William Sidney Smith, the Turkish blue flag was confided to him, an honour never before conferred upon a Christian. It imparts the power of a pasha over the subjects of the grand seignior. The premature death of this meritorious officer was occasioned by the blowing up of the afterpart of the Theseus, while lying off Jaffa.

taining two hundred and thirty-eight men, were captured, together with the train of artillery. The cannon, platforms, and ammunition, were immediately landed at Acre, and used for its defence, and the gunboats manned and employed in molesting the enemy's posts established on the sea-coast, harassing their communications, and intercepting their convoys. The sea has always been fatal to the French, and, notwithstanding the difficulty of the country, we are inclined to think every obstacle should have been encountered by them in this transport of their artillery, rather than have trusted it to that element, which, as an arena of contention with the English, has always been to them so disastrous.

CHAPTER XIV.

The French make great progress in their approaches—The Turks are defeated in a sortie—Anecdote of Junot and Kleber—The French gain the outer tower of Acre—Sir Sidney Smith's despatch to Lord Nelson.

THIS year the equinoctial gales had been unusually severe, and the commodore, with the Tigre and the naval force under his command, had been compelled to take shelter under the lee of Mount Carmel. On his return to the roadstead off Acre, he found that the French had taken advantage of his unwilling and enforced absence to push their attacks vigorously. Their approaches had reached the counterscarp, and had penetrated even into the ditch of the north-east angle of the town wall. This angle was defended by a tower which they were rapidly undermining, in order to increase a breach they had already made in it, but which breach they had found to

be impracticable when they endeavoured to storm it on the 1st of April.

In this mining operation they were greatly impeded by the fire of the guns that had been lately captured from the French, and which had been quickly mounted and judiciously placed by Captain Wilmot * of the Alliance, who was unfortunately shot by a French rifleman a few days afterwards, the 8th of April, as he was mounting a howitzer on the breach. These guns played so actively and destructively under the direction of Colonel Phélypeaux, that the enemy's fire slackened considerably, and the widening of the breach was but slow in progress.

Yet this successful opposition had no effect upon the mine, and the most serious apprehensions were entertained that its firing would be fatal to the defence of the town. To counteract this, a sortie was resolved upon. It was finally arranged that a body of British seamen and marines was to endeavour to possess the mine, whilst the Turkish troops were to attack the French in their trenches on both sides. As this decisive operation was intended to be a surprise, the sally was made before daylight on the 7th of April. Owing to the impetuosity and noise of the Turks, this plan entirely failed, and the dreaded mine remained in all its terrors.

In no military effort upon record did the French display greater perseverance or more desperate bravery. In every one of their attacks they seemed to understand beforehand that destruction was to be the rule, and escape the exception. With this predestination strong upon them, they went up to the breach coolly and regularly, and with as much *nonchalance* as if death were an unimportant part of their military evolutions. Indeed, repeated attempts were made to mount the breach under such circumstances of desperation as to excite the pity of their British foes to see such vain and bloody sacrifices of energy and courage.

Though hostilities were carried on with such vigour and apparent rancour in the trenches and on the breach, yet there were frequent suspensions of operations, and the distinguished French generals, on such occasions, derived much pleasure from visiting Sir Sidney on board the Tigre. On one of these occasions, and after the besieging party had made some progress, Generals Kleber and Junot were, with Sir Sidney Smith, walking the quarter-deck of the Tigre in a very amiable mood of amicability, one on each side the English commander-in-chief.

After a few turns in silence, Junot, regarding

the battered fortifications that lay before him, and they being dwindled by distance into much insignificancy, thus broke out in the spirit of false prophecy—

"Commodore, mark my words! three days hence, by this very hour, the French tricolor shall be flying on the remains of that miserable town."

Sir Sidney very quickly replied, "My good general, before you shall have that town, I will blow it and you to Jericho."

"*Bien obligé!* very much obliged," Kleber observed; "much obliged indeed—it will be all in our way to India."

"With all my heart," rejoined Sir Sidney, "I shall be most happy to assist you, Bonaparte, and your whole army, forward in that style; and we will commence as soon as you please."

The offer, though very kindly made, was neither accepted nor replied to.

Nine times had the enemy attempted to storm the trench, and on each occasion had been beaten back with profuse slaughter, such was the determined bravery opposed to their desperate assaults, when, on the fifty-first day of the siege, the long-expected and anxiously looked for reinforcements, under Hassan Bey, appeared in the

distance. Before its junction could be effected, and relief thrown into the town, Bonaparte was resolved to do the utmost that his genius and the bravery of his army could achieve. His efforts were, therefore, renewed with the most impetuous vigour, whilst, on the part of the besieged, they were met with a corresponding spirit. All that skill and bravery could perform was mutually displayed. Under all disadvantages, the enemy, however, continued to advance, and at length got possession of the long-disputed north-east tower. This they accomplished, not by the explosion of the mine, but, having battered down the upper part of the structure, they ascended over the ruins, and, at daylight on the fifty-second morning of the siege, the tricolored flag was seen floating on the outer angle of the tower.

This display damped, considerably, the enterprise of the Turkish soldiers, and the fire of the besieged on the French lines was sensibly slackened. The enemy had also, during the night, obtained another important advantage, having been enabled to construct two traverses that completely screened them from the flanking fire of the Tigre and the Theseus, which, till then, had taken deadly effect upon every advance towards the breach. These two traverses were thrown up directly across the ditch, and were constructed with dead bodies intermingled with sandbags.

Such, as we have above described, was the critical position of the Turkish garrison and their brave allies when Hassan Bey's reinforcement arrived. The reader will of course understand that they came along the sea-coast in transports. These troops, before the vessels anchored, were hurried into the boats, but they were still distant from the shore, whilst the French were rallying the last and their best energies to carry the town. Such being the critical position of affairs, a strenuous and sudden effort on the part of the British was indispensable to preserve the place for a short time, until the landing and receiving the reinforcements into the fortress.

This effort, at once gallant, wise, and successful, with its subsequent operations, we shall give in Sir William Sidney Smith's own words, in his animated and graphic official report to Lord Nelson.

"*Tigre, Acre, May* 9.

"My Lord,—I had the honour to inform your lordship, by my letter of the 2d instant, that we were busily employed completing two ravelins for the reception of cannon to flank the enemy's nearest approaches, distant only ten yards from them. They were attacked that very night, and almost every night since, but the enemy have each time been repulsed with very considerable

loss. The enemy continued to batter in breach with progressive success, and have nine several times attempted to storm, but have as often been beaten back with immense slaughter. Our best mode of defence has been frequent sorties to keep them on the defensive, and impede the progress of their covering works. We have thus been in one continued battle ever since the beginning of the siege, interrupted only at short intervals by the excessive fatigue of every individual on both sides. We have been long anxiously looking for a reinforcement, without which we could not expect to be able to keep the place so long as we have. The delay in its arrival being occasioned by Hassan Bey's having originally had orders to join me in Egypt, I was obliged to be very peremptory in the repetition of my orders for him to join me here: it was not, however, till the evening of the day before yesterday, the fifty-first day of the siege, that his fleet of corvettes and transports made its appearance. The approach of this additional strength was the signal to Bonaparte for a most vigorous and persevering assault, in hopes to get possession of the town before the reinforcement to the garrison could disembark.

"The constant fire of the besiegers was suddenly increased tenfold; our flanking fire afloat was, as usual, plied to the utmost, but with less

effect than heretofore, as the enemy had thrown up epaulments and traverses of sufficient thickness to protect him from it. The guns that could be worked to the greatest advantage were a French brass eighteen-pounder in the light-house castle, manned from the Theseus, under the direction of Mr. Scroder, master's mate, and the last mounted twenty-four-pounder in the north ravelin, manned from the Tigre, under the direction of Mr. Jones, midshipman. These guns being within grape distance of the head of the attacking column, added to the Turkish musketry, did great execution; and I take this opportunity of recommending these two petty officers, whose indefatigable vigilance and zeal merit my warmest praise. The Tigre's two sixty-eight pound carronades, mounted in two dgermes, lying in the Mole, and worked under the direction of Mr. Bray, carpenter of the Tigre, (one of the bravest and most intelligent men I ever served with,) threw shells into the centre of this column with evident effect, and checked it considerably. Still, however, the enemy gained ground, and made a lodgment in the second story of the north-east tower; the upper part being entirely battered down, and the ruins in the ditch forming the ascent by which they mounted. Daylight showed us the French standard on the outer angle of the tower. The

fire of the besieged was much slackened, in comparison to that of the besiegers, and our flanking fire was become of less effect, the enemy having covered themselves in this lodgment and the approach to it by two traverses across the ditch, which they had constructed under the fire that had been opposed to them during the whole night, and which were now seen, composed of sand-bags, and the bodies of their dead built in with them, their bayonets only being visible above them. Hassan Bey's troops were in the boats, though as yet but half way on shore. This was a most critical point of the contest, and an effort was necessary to preserve the place for a short time till their arrival.

" I accordingly landed the boats at the Mole, and took the crews up to the breach, armed with pikes. The enthusiastic gratitude of the Turks, men, women, and children, at the sight of such a reinforcement, at such a time, is not to be described.

" Many fugitives returned with us to the breach, which we found defended by a few brave Turks, whose most destructive missile weapons were heavy stones, which, striking the assailants on the head, overthrew the foremost down the slope, and impeded the progress of the rest. A succession, however, ascended to the assault, the

heap of ruins between the two parties serving as a breastwork to both; the muzzles of their muskets touching, and the spear-heads of their standards locked. Dgezzar Pasha, hearing the English were on the breach, quitted his station, where, according to the ancient Turkish custom, he was sitting to reward such as should bring him the heads of the enemy, and distributing musket cartridges with his own hands. The energetic old man, coming behind us, pulled us down with violence; saying, if any harm happened to his English friends, all was lost. This amicable contest, as to who should defend the breach, occasioned a rush of Turks to the spot; and thus time was gained for the arrival of the first body of Hassan Bey's troops. I had now to combat the Pasha's repugnance to admitting any troops but his Albanians into the garden of his seraglio, which had become a very important post, as occupying the terreplein of the rampart. There were about two hundred of the original one thousand Albanians left alive. This was no time for debate, and I overruled his objections by introducing the Chifflick regiment, of one thousand men, armed with bayonets, disciplined after the European method under Sultan Selim's own eye, and placed, by his Imperial Majesty's express command, at my disposal. The garrison, ani-

mated by the appearance of such a reinforcement, was now all on foot; and there being consequently enough to defend the breach, I proposed to the Pasha to get rid of the object of his jealousy, by opening his gates to let them make a sally, and take the assailants in flank: he readily complied, and I gave directions to the colonel to get possession of the enemy's third parallel or nearest trench, and there fortify himself by shifting the parapet outwards. This order being clearly understood, the gates were opened, and the Turks rushed out; but they were not equal to such a movement, and were driven back to the town with loss. Mr. Bray,* however, as usual, protected the town-gate efficaciously with grape from the sixty-eight pounders. The sortie had this good effect, that it obliged the enemy to expose themselves above their parapets, so that our flanking fires brought down numbers of them, and drew their force from the breach, so that the small number remaining on the lodgment were killed or dispersed by our few remaining hand grenades thrown by Mr. Savage, midshipman of the Theseus. The enemy began a new breach by an incessant fire

* Mr. Bray was carpenter of the Tigre, and appears to have been a very superior man in every respect to the generality of warrant officers.

directed to the southward of the lodgment, every shot knocking down whole sheets of a wall, much less solid than that of the tower, on which they had expended so much time and ammunition. The group of generals and aides-de-camp, which the shells from the sixty-eight pounders had frequently dispersed, was now re-assembled on Richard Cœur de Lion's Mount. Bonaparte was distinguishable in the centre of a semi-circle: his gesticulations indicated a renewal of attack, and his despatching an aide-de-camp showed that he waited only for a reinforcement. I gave directions for Hassan Bey's ships to take their station in the shoal water to the southward, and made the Tigre's signal to weigh, and join the Theseus to the northward. A little before sunset, a massive column appeared advancing to the breach with a solemn step. The Pasha's idea was not to defend the breach this time, but rather to let a certain number of the enemy in, and then close with them according to the Turkish mode of war. The column thus mounted the breach unmolested, and descended from the rampart into the Pasha's garden, where, in a very few minutes, the bravest and most advanced among them lay headless corpses; the sabre, with the addition of a dagger in the other hand, proving more than a match for the bayonet. The rest

retreated precipitately; and the commanding officer, who was seen manfully encouraging his men to mount the breach, and who we had since learnt to be General Lannes, was carried off, wounded by a musket-shot. General Rombaud was killed. Much confusion arose in the town from the actual entry of the enemy, it having been impossible, nay impolitic, to give previous information to every body of the mode of defence adopted, lest the enemy should come to a knowledge of it by means of their numerous emissaries.

"The English uniform, which had served as a rallying point for the old garrison, wherever it appeared, was now in the dusk mistaken for French, the newly-arrived Turks not distinguishing between one hat and another in the crowd, and thus many a severe blow of a sabre was parried by our officers, among which Colonel Douglas,* Mr. Ives, and Mr. Jones, had nearly lost their lives, as they were forcing their way through a torrent of fugitives. Calm was restored by the Pasha's exertions, aided by Mr. Trotte, just arrived with Hassan Bey; and thus the contest of twenty-five hours ended, both parties being so fatigued as to be unable to move.

"Bonaparte will, no doubt, renew the attack,

* The late Sir John Douglas, of the Royal Marines.

the breach being, as above described, perfectly practicable for fifty men abreast; indeed the town is not, nor ever has been defensible, according to the rules of art, but according to every other rule it must and shall be defended: not that it is in itself worth defending, but we feel that it is by this breach Bonaparte means to march to farther conquests. It is on the issue of this conflict that depends the opinion of the multitude of spectators on the surrounding hills, who wait only to see how it ends, to join the victors; and with such a reinforcement for the execution of his known projects, Constantinople, and even Vienna, must feel the shock.

"Be assured, my lord, the magnitude of our obligations does but increase the energy of our efforts in the attempt to discharge our duty; and though we may, and probably shall be overpowered, I can venture to say that the French army will be so much farther weakened before it prevails, as to be little able to profit by its dear-bought victory.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"W. SIDNEY SMITH.

"*Rear-Admiral Lord Nelson.*"

This despatch is exceedingly well written, and is made singularly graceful by the air of mo-

desty which pervades it. Sir Sidney well understood the nature of the contest, and that to the moral effect of victory or defeat, the loss or the salvation of the miserable heap of ruins called Acre was but as dust in the balance.

Already had the Syrians been so prepossessed with the irresistibility of the French forces—an idea by no means preposterous when the invariable success of these invaders was considered—that all efforts of resistance had been paralysed. Had it not been for the stimulating influence of British courage, Bonaparte would have met with no opposition, and he and his generals, there is every reason to suppose, would have been wholly unimpeded in whatever plans of conquest, personal aggrandisement, or political vengeance, they might have concerted.

This British opposition in defence of Acre fell with peculiar and exasperating force upon the commander-in-chief of the republican army. This was displayed by the increased irritability of his temper; and, in the fervour of this very natural vexation, he called for the most cruel sacrifices on the part of his brave followers, and evinced a determination to extend them to the utmost limits of human endurance. We are no depreciators of the extraordinary genius of Bonaparte, nor do we think that, placed in the

situation he was, he could, or that he ought to have acted differently. The obstacle before him must, he well knew, be surmounted, or, sooner or later, defeat and universal discomfiture awaited him. It might, perhaps, have been well for the destiny of nations and the tranquillity of Europe, had he met with a less sturdy opponent than Sir Sidney. Had he succeeded before St. Jean d'Acre, another and a less disastrous course might have been opened to his ambition.

But we must return to this singular siege and still more singular defence. The gallant antagonist of the future first consul was fully aware of the advantage he had gained, and well knew how to improve it to the utmost. Rightly judging that the prejudice in favour of Gallic invincibility must be considerably shaken by the late events, and by the fatal check that was given to the advancement of their arms, Sir Sidney wrote a circular letter to the princes and chiefs of Mount Lebanon, and to the shieks of the Druses, by which he exhorted them to do their duty to their sovereign by intercepting the supplies of the enemy on their way to the French camp. This sagacious proceeding had all the good consequences that might have been expected from it. Two ambassadors were sent to the commodore, informing him that, in consequence of his man-

dates, measures had been taken to cut off the supplies hitherto furnished to the invaders; and, as a proof of the accuracy of this assertion, eighty French prisoners, who had been captured in the defence of their convoys, were placed at the disposal of the British.

Thus baffled in front, and straitened on all sides, the paramount object of the French was to mount the breach. To this every other consideration must give way. Accordingly, General Kleber's division was ordered from the fords of the river Jordan, where it had been successfully opposed to the army of Damascus, to take its turn in an attempt that had already occasioned the loss of the flower of the French troops of the besieging division, with more than two-thirds of its officers. But on the arrival of General Kleber and his army, there was other employment found for them.

In the sally before mentioned, made by the Turkish Chifflick regiment, it had shown a want of steadiness in the presence of the enemy, and was in consequence censured. The commandant of that corps, Soliman Aga, having received orders from Sir Sidney Smith to obtain possession of the enemy's third parallel, availed himself of this opportunity to retrieve the lost honour of his regiment; and, the next night,

carried his orders into execution with that ardour and resolution, which not only completely effected the service upon which he was sent, but also highly benefited the public cause by the gallant display of his men. The third parallel was gained; but the gallant Turk, wishing to do more, and thus to elevate his regiment to a position still more honourable than that which they had forfeited, attacked the second trench, but without the same success that attended his first attempt, as he lost some standards. However, he retained possession of the works long enough to spike four of the enemy's guns, and do them other material damage.

On the arrival, therefore, of Kleber's division, its original destination of mounting the breach was changed into that of recovering these works, which, after a furious contest of three hours, and much loss of life, was accomplshed. Notwithstanding this very limited success, the advantage evidently remained on the side of the besieged. Indeed the resistance displayed, though unsuccessfully, was decisive, as it so far damped the zeal of the French troops that they could not be again brought to the breach.

CHAPTER XV.

Sir Sidney's second despatch—Describes the progress and the termination of the siege—The French retreat in disorder—The conduct of Bonaparte—Testimonials at home to the distinguished services of Sir Sidney Smith.

FROM this moment all the efforts of the French were feeble and disjointed. Discontent prevailed universally through the ranks, and the officers openly expressed their discontent and disapprobation at the frantic proceedings of their general. The siege was virtually at an end. Fortunately for posterity, we are enabled to give Sir Sidney Smith's impression of Bonaparte's conduct during the siege, and after his retreat from Acre. It is officially stated, and is a most important document.

"After this failure, the French grenadiers absolutely refused to mount the breach any more over the putrid bodies of their unburied compa-

nions, sacrificed, in former attacks, by Bonaparte's impatience and precipitation, which led him to commit such palpable errors as even seamen could take advantage of. He seemed to have no principle of action but that of pressing forward; and appeared to stick at nothing to obtain the object of his ambition, although it must be evident to every body else, that even if he had succeeded in taking the town, the fire of the shipping must drive him out of it again in a short time: however, the knowledge the garrison had of the inhuman massacre at Jaffa, rendered them desperate in their personal defence. Two attempts to assassinate me in the town having failed, recourse was had to a most flagrant breach of every law of honour and of war. A flag of truce was sent into the town by the hand of an Arab dervise, with a letter to the Pasha, proposing a cessation of arms for the purpose of burying the dead bodies, the stench from which became intolerable, and threatened the existence of every one of us on both sides, many having died delirious within a few hours after being seized with the first symptoms of infection. It was natural that we should gladly listen to this proposition, and that we should consequently be off our guard during the conference. While the answer was under consideration, a volley of shot and shells

on a sudden announced an assault, which, however, the garrison was ready to receive, and the assailants only contributed to increase the number of the dead bodies in question, to the eternal disgrace of the general, who thus disloyally sacrificed them. I saved the life of the Arab from the effect of the indignation of the Turks, and took him off to the Tigre with me, from whence I sent him back to the general with a message, which made the French army ashamed of having been exposed to such a merited reproof. Subordination was now at an end; and all hopes of success having vanished, the enemy had no alternative left but a precipitate retreat, which was put in execution in the night between the 20th and 21st instant. I had above said that the battering-train of artillery (except the carriages, which were burnt) is now in our hands, amounting to twenty-three pieces. The howitzers and medium twelve-pounders, originally conveyed by land with much difficulty, and successfully employed to make the first breach, were embarked in the country vessels at Jaffa, to be conveyed coastwise, together with the worst among the two thousand wounded, which embarrassed the march of the army. The operation was to be expected; I took care, therefore, to be between Jaffa and Damietta before the French army could get as

far as the former place. The vessels being hurried to sea, without seamen to navigate them, and the wounded being in want of every necessary, even water and provisions, they steered straight to his Majesty's ships, in full confidence of receiving the succours of humanity, in which they were not disappointed. I have sent them on to Damietta, where they will receive further aid as their situation requires, and which it was out of my power to give to so many. Their expressions of gratitude to us were mingled with execrations on the name of their general, who had, as they said, thus exposed them to peril, rather than fairly and honourably renew the intercourse with the English, which he had broken off by a false and malicious assertion that I had intentionally exposed the former prisoners to the infection of the plague. To the honour of the French army be it said, this assertion was not believed by them, and it thus recoiled on its author. The intention of it was evidently to do away the effect which the proclamation of the Porte began to make on the soldiers, whose eager hands were held above the parapet of their works to receive them when thrown from the breach. He cannot plead misinformation as his excuse, his aide-de-camp, M. Lallemand, having had free intercourse with

these prisoners on board the Tigre, when he came to treat about them; and they having been ordered, though too late, not to repeat their expressions of contentment at the prospect of going home. It was evident to both sides, that when a general had recourse to such a shallow, and at the same time to such a mean artifice as a malicious falsehood, all better resources were at an end, and the defection in his army was consequently increased to the highest pitch. The utmost disorder has been manifested in the retreat; and the whole track between Acre and Gaza is strewed with the dead bodies of those who have sunk under fatigue, or the effect of slight wounds; such as could walk, unfortunately for them, not having been embarked. The rowing gunboats annoyed the van column of the retreating army in its march along the beach, and the Arabs harassed its rear when it turned inland to avoid their fire. We observed the smoke of musketry behind the sand-hills from the attack of a party of them which came down to our boats, and touched our flag with every token of union and respect. Ismael Pasha, governor of Jerusalem, to whom notice was sent of Bonaparte's preparations for retreat, having entered this town by land at the same time that we brought our guns to bear on it by sea, a stop was

put to the massacre and pillage already begun by the Naplausians. The English flag rehoisted on the consul's house (under which the Pasha met me) serves as an asylum for all religions, and every description of the surviving inhabitants. The heaps of unburied Frenchmen lying on the bodies of those whom they massacred two months ago, afford another proof of divine justice, which has caused these murderers to perish by the infection arising from their own atrocious act. Seven poor wretches are left alive in the hospital, where they are protected, and shall be taken care of. We have had a most dangerous and painful duty, in disembarking here, to protect the inhabitants; but it has been effectually done; and Ismael Pasha deserves every credit for his humane exertions and cordial co-operation to that effect. Two thousand cavalry are just despatched to harass the French rear, and I am in hopes to overtake their van in time to profit by their disorder; but this will depend on the assembling of sufficient force, and on exertions of which I am not absolutely master, though I do my utmost to give the necessary impulse, and a right direction.

"I have every confidence that the officers and men of the three ships under my orders, who, in the face of a most formidable enemy, have forti-

fied a town that had not a single heavy gun mounted on the land-side, and who have carried on all intercourse by boats, under a constant fire of musketry and grape, will be able efficaciously to assist the army in its future operations. This letter will be delivered to your lordship by Lieutenant Canes, first of the Tigre, whom I have judged worthy to command the Theseus, as captain, ever since the death of my much-lamented friend and coadjutor, Captain Miller. I have taken Lieutenant England, first of that ship, to my assistance in the Tigre, by whose exertions, and those of Lieutenant Summers and Mr. Atkinson, together with the bravery of the rest of the officers and men, that ship was saved, though on fire in five places at once, from a deposit of French shells bursting on board her.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"W. SIDNEY SMITH.

"*Right Hon. Lord Nelson,*" *&c.*

All who ever knew, either officially or personally, Sir William Sidney Smith, will avouch that he is incapable of wilful misrepresentation. With all our respect for Bonaparte's splendid genius, and fully entering into the astounding difficulties with which he was surrounded, we must pronounce that the above-quoted document

is damnatory to his fame. We have attentively perused, and deeply considered, the numerous defences by his adherents and admirers, as well as what the Emperor himself has said upon those charges so abhorrent to humanity, and we have found in those attempted justifications nothing but the palliations of expediency. His conduct at Acre is a great blot upon his fame.

When Barry O'Meara, the English surgeon attached to Bonaparte at St. Helena, conversed with Bonaparte on this subject, he honestly replied, that "Sir Sidney displayed great talent and bravery;" and confessed that he was the chief cause of his failure there, on account of his having taken all his battering-train in the manner we have narrated. He declared that, had it not been for that, he would have taken Acre in spite of him. He acknowledged that he behaved very bravely, and that he was most ably supported by Phélypeaux, whom Bonaparte called a man of talent, saying that he had studied engineering under him. He also does justice to Major Douglas, remarking that he behaved very gallantly; and proceeds in his remarks, accounting for his defeat, thus: "The acquisition of five or six hundred seamen as canonniers was a great advantage to the Turks, whose spirits they revived, and whom they showed how to defend

the fortress. But he committed a great fault in making sorties," (one of which, by its success, turned the fate of the struggle,) "which cost the lives of two or three hundred brave fellows, without the possibility of success; for it was impossible that he could succeed against the number of French before Acre.

"I would lay a wager that he lost half of his crew in them." (The ex-emperor was wrong there.) "He dispersed proclamations among my troops, which certainly shook some of them; and I, in consequence, published an order, stating that he was *mad*, and forbidding all communication with him. Some days after, he sent, by a lieutenant or midshipman, a flag of truce, with a challenge to meet me at some place which he pointed out, in order to fight a duel. I laughed at this, and sent back intimation that when he sent Marlborough to fight me, I would meet him. Notwithstanding this, I like the character of the man."

We may be indulged in some observations upon this *fanfarade*, which is altogether highly honourable to Sir Sidney; still more so, seeing it came from the mouth of a renowned and beaten enemy.

In the abstract, we do not think that the dispersing incitements to revolt amongst the soldiery

of an enemy is a legitimate—we know it not to be a fair—method of warfare; but, in this case, it was only a very gentle retaliation of a system carried on outrageously by Bonaparte himself. We hold it to be as ungenerous and as treacherous to endeavonr to raise to revolt and to poison the minds of the enemy, as it would be morally to drug the wells and springs at which they must drink. But Bonaparte set the example of this moral poisoning, and fought in Egypt almost as much by proclamation as by the ball and bayonet. The taunt, therefore, comes with but an ill grace from the mouth of Napoleon.

He could not help dashing a little cold water into his freewill offering of praise; he was beaten, and therefore he not very wisely undervalues and depreciates the powers which chastised him, which is a foolish sacrifice of pique at the shrine of personal vanity.

As to the account of the duel affair, which we are inclined to believe, we confess that it is rather out of the usual routine of military matters, and, being a bad imitation of two or three examples of antiquity, is in execrable taste. But it is a mistake only of a high and chivalrous mind; and viewing the gasconading answer of the challenged, we think Napoleon gains nothing at

all by the story. Sir Sidney, in common with every Englishman of that period, had strong prejudices against Bonaparte, as the very head and heart of the demoralising and irreligious principles that it seemed to be the aim of France to establish throughout the world. To annihilate, at a single blow, this moral pest, seemed to be well worth the risk of one life—to say nothing at all of the purely personal insult that Bonaparte publicly put upon him, in proclaiming him mad.

And a very pleasant thing it is to reflect upon—the making an opponent mad by a general order. If Sir Sidney Smith was affected with madness, there was dreadful method in it—a method that out-manœuvred and out-generalled the man that discovered the insanity. We gladly take the wheat from this testimony of Bonaparte, and leave to him, and to those who blindly admire him, the chaff.

We think that it may be fairly stated that the retreat of Bonaparte from before Acre was conducted in a spirit of exasperation and cruelty, generated by disappointed pride and baffled ambition. He was great only in success, and a stranger to the greatest of greatness—greatness in adversity. In after life he attempted this grandeur, but could not support the character.

As he wended his miserable and discomfited way from the scene of his defeat, he seems to have been wholly the slave of passion and resentment, and to regret that his powers of showing his anger, mighty as they were, were too little for the magnitude of his will.

It has been urged against him that, in his march the magazines and granaries with which he met were all fired, that desolation and rapine marked his progress, that the cattle were wantonly destroyed, and " that the affrighted inhabitants, with rage in their hearts, beheld, without being able to prevent, the disasters which marked their invader's way." This may be true, but it is the common picture of all retreating armies; and let it be remembered that Bonaparte, as he marched, was continually in hostilities, and that it would not have been the most approved military strategy to have left to his pursuers magazines and well-stored granaries, with herds of fat cattle. Let us confine ourselves, in our condemnation of this great man, to the facts, and to the charges brought against him, in truth and in honesty, by Sir Sidney Smith. As we have before stated, some of his acts have been explained, and some palliated; yet still, the amount of guilt is heavy against him.

In a siege of so long a duration as that which

we have just narrated—a siege in which the actual fighting was not only daily and hourly, but almost unintermitting, acts of individual heroism were numberless, and must remain for ever unrecorded. However, very many of these little Homeric episodes became extremely popular, and obtained their immortality of a day, and some even found their way into print. We believe that we are acquainted with most of them, having repeatedly had the tedium of a middle watch changed into four hours of pleasurable excitement, by a full description of this siege, with all its attendant anecdotes, from a brother officer, an eye-witness. These anecdotes it would be amusing to preserve, and we would willingly give them a place in this biography, were they not foreign to our subject. One, however, we cannot refrain from shortly narrating, as many versions of it have appeared, and we believe that ours only is the true one. It is succinctly this.

The seamen of the squadron took each their turn for the military service on the walls of Acre. One of them, belonging to the Tigre, had observed, in his spell ashore, the body of a French general, splendid in his uniform, that lay exposed in the very centre of the ditch. This dwelt on the mind of the honest, though—the truth must be told—somewhat obtuse-minded tar. Indeed, he

had never shown himself remarkable either for intellect or activity, and held no higher office in the ship than a waister. Yet, by some unexplained mental process, the fate and the unburied corpse of the French general had fixed themselves so strongly on his imagination, that he was determined, at all risks, to give his glittering dead opponent the rights of sepulture. The next day, though out of his turn, he asked and obtained permission to take his spell on the walls. Nothing divided the hostile entrenchments but this same ditch, and so closely placed were the foes to each other, that a moderate whisper could be easily heard from one embankment to the other. Nothing appeared above these embankments but a serried line of bayonets, for if a hat or a head, or anything tangible, appeared on either side, it was saluted with a volley of perforating balls. It was about noon, and the respective hostile lines were preserving a dead silence, anxiously watching for the opportunity of a shot at each other. Our seaman—without informing any one of his intention, had provided himself with a spade and pickaxe—suddenly broke the ominous silence by shouting out, in a stentorian voice, "Mounseers, a-hoy! 'vast heaving there a bit, will ye? and belay over all with your poppers for a spell." And then he shoved his broad unmean-

ing face over the lines. Two hundred muskets were immediately pointed at him, but seeing him with only the implements of digging, and not exactly understanding his demand for a parley, the French forbore to fire. Jack very leisurely then scrambled over the entrenchment into the ditch, the muzzle of the enemy's muskets still following his every motion. All this did not in the least disturb his *sang froid;* but going up to the French general, he took his measure in quite a business-like manner, and dug a very decent grave close alongside the defunct in glory. When this was finished, shaking what was so lately a French general very cordially and affectionately by the hand, he reverently placed him in his *impromptu* grave, then shovelled the earth upon and made all smooth above him. When all was properly completed, he made his best sailor's bow and foot-scrape to the French, shouldered his implements of burial, and climbed over into his own quarters with the same imperturbability that had marked his previous appearance. This he did amidst the cheers of both parties.

Now, our friend the waister seemed to think that he had done nothing extraordinary, and only remarked that he should sleep well. A few days after, another gaudily decorated French general came on board the Tigre, on some mat-

ters of negociation, which when completed, he anxiously expressed a desire to see the interrer of his late comrade. The meeting took place, and Jack was highly praised for his heroism in a long speech, not one word of which, though interpreted to him, could he comprehend. Money was then offered him, which at first he did not like to take; but he at length satisfied his scruples by telling the French officer he should be happy to do the same thing for him as he had done for his brother general—for nothing. The French general begged to be excused, and thus ended the interview.

Apologising for this somewhat simple digression, we return to our biography; and it is with unfeigned pleasure that we relate that the world was not, at that time, wholly deficient of gratitude, and that splendid services were splendidly rewarded, without distinction of clique, creed, or party. When the Grand Seignior received the news of the horrible carnage in and before Acre, he shed tears. This grief, however, for the slaughter of his subjects did not prevent his rejoicing at the signal defeat Bonaparte sustained, and sustained wretchedly. His Imperial Majesty, to testify his satisfaction, presented the messenger with seven purses, containing altogether three thousand florins, and immediately sent a Tartar

to Sir William Sidney Smith, with an aigrette and sable fur (similar to those bestowed upon Lord Nelson) worth twenty-five thousand piastres. He afterwards conferred upon him the insignia of the Ottoman order of the Crescent.

The loss on the part of the British, in this glorious achievement, was comparatively small. The British squadron consisted of the Tigre, the Theseus, and the Alliance; and these ships together had fifty-three killed, thirteen drowned, and eighty-two taken prisoners. We have already mentioned the death of some of the officers.

The English estimation of Sir William Sidney Smith's eminent services nobly kept pace with Turkish gratitude. The enthusiasm of his country in his favour was general, and a reference to the parliamentary reports of the time bear a lasting and unequivocal testimony to the feelings of approbation with which his spirited as well as wise conduct was viewed. George III. himself, on the opening of the parliamentary session, on the 24th of September, 1799, noticed the heroism of Sir Sidney Smith, and the advantage that the nation were deriving from his success before Acre. Not only did the king's ministers and friends, but even their opponents, forgetting the rancours of party feeling in their enthusiasm for a military victory so splendid, when military victories

had not yet become the rule of the British arms, joined most heartily in the national applause.

On the 2d of October, when the imperial parliament had met to pay a nation's just tribute of praise to its naval defenders, Lord Spencer thus did himself honour in addressing his brother peers.

He said, that "he had next to take notice of an exploit which had never been surpassed, and scarcely ever equalled, in the annals of history—he meant the defence of St. Jean d'Acre by Sir Sidney Smith. He had no occasion to impress upon their Lordships a higher sense than they already entertained of the brilliancy, utility, and distinction of an achievement, in which a general of great celebrity, and a veteran victorious army, were, after a desperate and obstinate engagement, which lasted almost without intermission for sixty days, not only repulsed, but totally defeated, by the gallantry and heroism of this British officer, and the small number of troops under his command.

"He owned it was not customary, nor did he think it had any precedent in the proceedings of parliament, that so high an honour should be conferred on long services, which might be performed by a force so inconsiderable in point of

numbers; but the splendour of such an exploit, as defeating a veteran and well-appointed army, commanded by experienced generals, and which had already overrun a great part of Europe, a fine portion of Africa, and attempted also the conquest of Asia, eclipsed all former examples, and could not be subjected to the rules of ordinary usage. He, therefore, in full confidence of universal approbation, moved "the thanks of the House to Captain Sir William Sidney Smith, and the British seamen under his command, for their gallant and successful defence of St. Jean d'Acre against the desperate attack of the French army, under the command of General Bonaparte."

This speech was received with great and universal cheering; upon which Lord Hood rose and said—"He could not give a vote on the present occasion without bearing his testimony to the skill and valour of Sir Sidney, which had been so conspicuously and brilliantly exerted when he had the honour and benefit of having him under his command. Had that officer been at the head of a more considerable force, there was every probability that not a Frenchman would have escaped. The nation must be sensible of the importance and benefit of the service that had been achieved; and judging from his character

and conduct, he made no doubt but even this was only an earnest of his future glory, whenever an opportunity presented itself."

Lord Grenville said—" There never was a motion, since he had had a seat in that House, to which he gave a more hearty concurrence and assent. The circumstance of so eminent a service having been performed with so inconsiderable a force was, with him, an additional reason for affording this testimony of public gratitude, and the highest honour this House had it in its power to confer. By this gallant and unprecedented resistance, we behold the conqueror of Italy, the future Alexander, not only defeated and driven from the situation at which he had arrived, but also obliged to retreat in disorder and confusion to parts where it was not likely that he would find shelter from the pursuit of British skill and intrepidity. How glorious must the whole appear, when they looked to the contrast between the victors and the vanquished! Bonaparte's progress throughout the whole of his military career was marked with every trait of cruelty and treachery. Sir Sidney Smith, in defiance of every principle of humanity, and of all the acknowledged rules of war, had been long, with the most cool and cruel inflexibility, confined in a dungeon of the Temple, from which he

only escaped by his own address and intrepidity. But the French, by making him an exception from the general usages of war, had only manifested their sense of his value, and how much they were afraid of him. This hero, in the progress of events, was afterwards destined to oppose the enemy in a distant quarter; and, instead of indulging in any sentiments of revenge or resentment against his former persecutors, indulged the natural feelings of his heart, by interfering and saving the lives of a number of French prisoners. Soon after this, when victorious in an obstinate contest, where he was but indifferently supported by the discipline of the native troops, or means of defence in the fortifications of the fortress, he generously and humanely lent his protecting aid to a body of miserable and wounded Frenchmen, who implored his assistance, when the cruelty and obstinacy of their own general had devoted them to almost inevitable destruction."

The motion was then agreed to *nem. diss.*, with a vote of thanks to the British officers, seamen, and troops under Sir Sidney Smith.

In the House of Commons, on the previous 16th of September, Mr. Dundas, in moving the thanks of the House on a similar occasion to that

which we have just related, thus alluded to the services of our gallant officer.

"A twelvemonth had not elapsed since this country felt some apprehension on account of the probable destination of the French army in Egypt—an apprehension which was much allayed by the memorable and glorious victory of Lord Nelson. The power of that army had been still much further reduced by the efforts of Sir Sidney Smith, who, with a handful of men, surprised a whole nation, who were his spectators, with the brilliancy of his triumph, contesting for sixty days with an enterprising and intrepid general at the head of his whole army. This conduct of Sir Sidney Smith was so surprising to him, that he hardly knew how to speak of it; he had not recovered from the astonishment which the account of the action had thrown him into. He had looked at it over and over again, and no view that he had been able to take of it had quite recovered him from the surprise and amazement which the account of the matter gave him. However, so it was; and the merit of Sir Sidney Smith was now the object of consideration, to praise or to esteem which too highly was impossible. He had heard that Sir Sidney Smith, who had his difficulties, had been spoken of lightly by

some persons; whoever they were, they were inconsiderate, and they might be left now to their inward shame, if they did not recant. Be that as it might, the House, he was confident, agreed with him that the conduct of Sir Sidney Smith, for heroism, and intrepidity, and active exertion, was never surpassed on any occasion. He was glad of the opportunity that he had to say this."

He then moved, that " the thanks of this House be given to Captain Sir Sidney Smith, for the conspicuous skill and heroism by which, with a few seamen under his command, he animated the Turkish troops against the formidable and desperate attack of the French army under the command of General Bonaparte." Passed, *nem. con.*

In this gratifying and distinguished manner were unanimously voted the thanks of both Houses of Parliament to Sir William Sidney Smith, and the officers and seamen under his command. To the commodore these demonstrations were accompanied by a testimonial more substantial, if not more honourable, in the shape of a well-earned pension of one thousand pounds per annum.

Nor did municipal gratitude lag in this generous race of recompensing the brave. The

city of London presented our hero with its freedom, accompanied by a sword valued at one hundred guineas. From the Turkey Company he also received a sword valued at thrice the price of the gift of the metropolitan corporation.

CHAPTER XVI.

Bonaparte's assumption of Mahometanism—His victory over the Turks — His flight from Egypt — Successes of the English and their Allies—Kleber's proposition to evacuate Egypt—The Convention of El Arish.

We are sincerely grieved that it falls to our lot so often to be compelled to mention the delinquencies of our once inveterate and at last conquered foe, the late Emperor of the French. We do this in no spirit of detraction, as we trust that there is sufficient of credit accruing to Sir Sidney Smith, without being compelled to place his conduct in striking contrast with his then infuriated enemy. But some of the unjustifiable acts of Bonaparte we must relate, in order that the measures undertaken by Sir Sidney to counteract their effects may be fully understood.

About a month after the defeated and disorganised republican army reached Cairo, a Turkish squadron came to an anchor off Aboukir. In announcing this event to the Egyptian Mussul-

mans Bonaparte had recourse to the following unwarrantable and absurd expressions in his proclamation: "On board that fleet are Russians, who hold in horror all who believe in the unity of God, because, in their lies, they believe in three Gods; but they will soon see that it is not in the number of gods that strength consists. The true believer who embarks in a ship where the cross is flying, he who hears, every day, the one only God blasphemed, is worse than an infidel."

This assumption of credence in the Mahomedan faith was despicably mean, and wholly unworthy of the talents of a great general. He needed not this paltry deceit, for he conquered this force honourably and fairly in the field.

On the 11th of July, the Turkish army disembarked at Aboukir, and soon made themselves masters of the fort, the garrison of which they put to the sword, in retaliation of the massacre which disgraced the French at Jaffa. It is earnestly to be wished that English influence had prevented this last useless atrocity—useless to the momentary conquerors, but replete with evil consequences to them in the sequel.

Confident of victory over a rash and undisciplined army, which had thus commenced its inauspicious career by a gratuitous cruelty, Bona-

parte immediately commenced his preparations by augmenting his cavalry with a number of fleet Arabian horses, and immediately set forward to meet his enemy.

In the meanwhile, Sir Sidney Smith, after the dispersal of the French army from before Acre, leaving every assistance in his power to the Turkish forces to enable them, with spirit, to follow up their advantages, had repaired to the different islands in the Archipelago, in order to refit the vessels and to recruit the health of the crews of his little squadron, and to Constantinople also, to concert such measures with the Ottoman government that might lead to the final expulsion of the common enemy from Egypt. He returned to Aboukir bay just in time to witness the encounter between the Turks and the French, which proved so disastrous to the former, and which defeat was the more mortifying to him, as he was unable to render any assistance to his rash allies.

At six o'clock on the morning of the 25th, the French made their appearance before the lines of entrenchment that the Turks had thrown up before Aboukir. At the first onset the French, who immediately attempted to storm the works, were repulsed with great loss to themselves. But the Mussulmans, though individually brave,

had not yet learned to act in combined masses with success, even against a beaten enemy. Elevated by the partial advantage that their bravery and physical strength had procured, they rushed out tumultuously from their entrenchments, and, according to their custom, began lopping off the heads of the slain and wounded. In the dispersion necessary to this barbarous operation, they exposed themselves to an impetuous attack of the republican generals, Lannes and the afterwards celebrated Murat. A dreadful carnage ensued, which terminated in a total defeat of the Turbans, and the recapture of Aboukir.

In this sanguinary conflict the greatest part of the Turkish army perished, for those who escaped the sword were mostly drowned in their fruitless attempt to get off to the vessels in the bay. As they had so lately refused quarter to the enemy, they expected and they received none.

Disastrous as was this defeat to the common cause, it was productive of one advantage, the freeing of the Egyptian soil from the presence of Bonaparte. This last victory of his forces afforded him the means of making his flight appear the less dishonourable. He immediately sent home a splendid despatch of his victory, and, four days

after its receipt by the Directory, he astonished them by his presence, having left Egypt on the 24th August, and landed at Frejus on the following 7th of October, to commence a career of military glory, for long unchecked until the fatal opposition of the English in Spain.

Towards the conclusion of this October, a considerable reinforcement of troops and ships having arrived from Constantinople, Sir William Sidney Smith, accompanied by the Turkish vice-admiral, Seid Ali Bey, resolved to proceed to the Damietta branch of the Nile, and to make an attack on that quarter, which, by thus occupying the attention of the enemy, would leave the Grand Vizier more at liberty to advance on the French, with the grand Egyptian army, on the side of the Desert. This plan of operations had been previously arranged between the commanders of the two forces. The result of this we will give in the commodore's own words, in his despatch to Lord Nelson, dated November 8th, 1799. It is a melancholy recital, and goes completely to prove how inadequate were the Turkish troops to act in masses.

"I lament to have to inform your Lordship of the melancholy death of Patrona Bey, the Turkish vice-admiral, who was assassinated at Cyprus in a mutiny of the Janissaries on the 18th October.

The command devolved on Seid Ali Bey, who had just joined me with the troops from Constantinople, composing the second maritime expedition for the recovery of Egypt. As soon as our joint exertions had restored order, we proceeded to the mouth of the Damietta branch of the Nile to make an attack thereon, as combined with the Supreme Vizier, in order to draw the attention of the enemy that way, and leave his highness more at liberty to advance with the grand army on the side of the Desert. The attack began by the Tigre's boats taking possession of a ruined castle, situated on the eastern side of the Bogaz, or entrance of the channel, which the inundation of the Nile had insulated from the mainland, leaving a fordable passage. The Turkish flag displayed on the tower of this castle was at once the signal for the Turkish gunboats to advance, and for the enemy to open their fire in order to dislodge us: their nearest post being a redoubt on the mainland, with two thirty-two pounders, and an eight-pounder field-piece mounted thereon, at point-blank shot distance.

" The fire was returned from the launch's carronade, mounted in a breach in the castle, and from field-pieces in the small boats, which soon obliged the enemy to discontinue working at an intrenchment they were making to oppose a

landing. Lieutenant Stokes was detached with the boats to check a body of cavalry advancing along the neck of land, in which he succeeded; but, I am sorry to say, with the loss of one man killed and one wounded. This interchange of shot continued with little intermission during the 29th, 30th, and 31st, while the Turkish transports were drawing nearer to the landing-place, our shells from the carronade annoying the enemy in his works and communications; at length the magazine blowing up, and one of their thirty-two pounders being silenced, a favourable moment offered for disembarkation. Orders were given accordingly; but it was not till the morning of the 1st of November that they could effectuate this operation.

"This delay gave time for the enemy to collect a force more than double that of the first division landed, and to be ready to attack it before the return of the boats with the remainder. The French advanced to the charge with bayonets. The Turks completely exculpated themselves from the suspicion of cowardice having been the cause of their delay; for when the enemy were within ten yards of them, they rushed on, sabre in hand, and in an instant completely routed the first line of the French infantry. The day was ours for the moment; but the impetuosity of Osman Aga

and his troops occasioned them to quit the station assigned them as a corps of reserve, and to run forward in pursuit of the fugitives. European tactics were of course advantageously employed by the French at this critical juncture. Their body of reserve came on in perfect order, while a charge of cavalry on the left of the Turks put them completely to the rout in their turn. Our flanking fire from the castle and boats, which had been hitherto plied with evident effect, was now necessarily suspended by the impossibility of pointing clear of the Turks in the confusion. The latter turned a random fire on the boats, to make them take them off, and the sea was in an instant covered with turbans, while the air was filled with piteous moans, calling to us for assistance. It was (as at Aboukir) a duty of some difficulty to afford it them, without being victims to their impatience, or overwhelmed with numbers: we however persevered, and saved all, except those whom the French took prisoners, by wading into the water after them; neither did the enemy interrupt us much in so doing."

Nothing discouraged by this repulse, or at least putting a bold face on these disasters, on the 29th of December ensuing, a detachment of marines, under Colonel Douglas, Lieutenant-Colonel Bromley, Captains Winter and Trotte,

and Mr. Thomas Smith, midshipman of the Tigre, accompanied an advanced body of the army of the Grand Vizier from Gaza to El Arish.

The fort El Arish was summoned, and the French refusing to capitulate, the place was reconnoitred by the English, and batteries immediately erected; the whole of which when opened had the most complete success. On the morning of the 29th, the enemy ceased to return the fire of the besiegers, and the fort, without any terms of capitulation being stipulated, was taken possession of. This success was disgraced by the revengeful ferocity of the Turks, whose thirst for blood could not be restrained. Three hundred of the French garrison were put to the sword by the Osmanlis.

The admixture of the British forces with the Turks had taught these barbarians admiration, but not mercy. They were unceasing in their applauses of the cheerful manner in which the detachment from the English squadron performed their unusual duties, exposed as they were on the Desert without tents, ill-fed, and with nothing but brackish water to drink. They beheld with astonishment these triumphs of civilised discipline.

The year 1799 was hardly completed, when

General Kleber, who had been left in command in Egypt on its abandonment by Bonaparte, had entered into a convention with the Grand Vizier for the total evacuation of Egypt by the French forces. This document was finally signed on the 24th January, 1800, and to which Sir William Sidney Smith, as auxiliary commander on the part of Great Britain, willingly acceded.

"*Convention for the Evacuation of Egypt, agreed upon by Citizens Desaix, General of Division, and Poussielgue, Administrator-general of Finances, Plenipotentiaries of the Commander-in-Chief Kleber,—and their Excellencies Moustafa Raschid Effendi Testerdar, and Moustafa Rassiche Effendi Riessul Knitab, Ministers Plenipotentiaries of his Highness the Supreme Vizier.*

"The French army in Egypt, wishing to give a proof of its desire to stop the effusion of blood, and to put an end to the unfortunate disagreements which have taken place between the French republic and the sublime Porte, consent to evacuate Egypt on the stipulations of the present convention, hoping that this concession will pave the way for the general pacification of Europe.

"I. The French army will retire with its arms,

baggage, and effects, to Alexandria, Rosetta, and Aboukir, there to be embarked and transported to France, both in its own vessels and in those which it will be necessary for the Sublime Porte to furnish it with : and in order that the aforesaid vessels may be the more speedily prepared, it is agreed, that a month after the ratification of the present convention, there shall be sent to the fort of Alexandria a commissary, with fifty purses, on the part of the Sublime Porte.

" II. There shall be an armistice of three months in Egypt, reckoning from the time of the signature of the present convention; and in case the truce shall expire before the aforesaid vessels to be furnished by the Sublime Porte shall be ready, the said truce shall be prolonged till the embarkation can be completely effected, it being understood on both sides that all possible means will be employed to secure the tranquillity of the armies and of the inhabitants, which is the object of the truce.

" III. The transport of the French army shall take place according to the regulations of commissaries appointed for this purpose by the Sublime Porte and General Kleber; and if any difference of opinion shall take place between the aforesaid commissaries respecting the embarkation, one shall be appointed by Commodore Sir

Sidney Smith, who shall decide the difference according to the maritime regulations of England.

"IV. The forts of Cathic and Salachich shall be evacuated by the French troops on the 8th day, or at the latest on the 10th day after the ratification of this convention. The town of Mansoura shall be evacuated on the 15th day, Damietta and Balbey on the 20th day. Suez shall be evacuated six days before Cairo. The other places on the east bank of the Nile shall be evacuated on the 10th day. The Delta shall be evacuated fifteen days after the evacuation of Cairo. The west banks of the Nile and its dependencies shall remain in the hands of the French till the evacuation of Cairo; and meanwhile, as they must be occupied by the French army till all its troops shall have descended from Upper Egypt, the said western bank and its dependencies will not be evacuated till the expiration of the truce, if it is impossible to evacuate them sooner. The places evacuated shall be given up to the Sublime Porte in the same situation in which they are at present.

"V. The city of Cairo shall be evacuated after forty days, if that is possible, or at the latest after forty-five days, reckoning from the ratification of the treaty.

"VI. It is expressly agreed, that the Sublime Porte shall use every effort that the French troops may fall back through the different places on the left bank of the Nile, with their arms and baggage, towards the head-quarters, without being disturbed or molested on their march in their persons, property, or honour, either by the inhabitants of Egypt or the troops of the imperial Ottoman army.

"VII. In consequence of the former article, and in order to prevent all difference and hostilities, measures shall be taken to keep the Turkish always at a sufficient distance from the French army.

"VIII. Immediately after the ratification of the present convention, all the Turks and other nations, without distinction, subjects of the Sublime Porte, imprisoned or retained in France, or in the power of the French in Egypt, shall be set at liberty; and, on the other hand, all the French detained in the cities and seaport towns of the Ottoman empire, as well as every person of whatever nation they may be, attached to French legations and consulates, shall be also set at liberty.

"IX. The restitution of the goods and property of the inhabitants and subjects of both sides, or the payment of their value to the proprietors,

shall commence immediately after the evacuation of Egypt, and shall be regulated at Constantinople by commissaries appointed respectively for the purpose.

"X. No inhabitant of Egypt, of whatever religion he may be, shall be disturbed either in his person or his property, on account of any connexions he may have had with the French during their possession of Egypt.

"XI. There shall be delivered to the French army, as well on the part of the Sublime Porte as of the courts of its allies, that is to say, of Russia and of Great Britain, passports, safe conducts, and convoys, necessary to secure its safe return to France.

"XII. When the French army of Egypt shall be embarked, the Sublime Porte, as well as its allies, promise that till its return to the continent of France it shall not be disturbed in any manner; and on this side, General-in-chief Kleber, and the French army in Egypt, promise not to commit any act of hostility during the aforesaid time, either against the fleets or against the territories of the Sublime Porte, and that the vessels which shall transport the said army shall not stop on any other coast than that of France, except from absolute necessity.

"XIII. In consequence of the truce of three

months stipulated above with the French army for the evacuation of Egypt, the contracting parties agree, that if in the interval of the said truce some vessels from France, unknown to the commanders of the allied fleets, should enter the port of Alexandria, they shall depart from it, after having taken in water and the necessary provisions, and shall return to France with passports from the allied courts; and in case any of the said vessels should require reparation, these alone may remain till the said reparations are finished, and shall depart immediately after, like the preceding, with the first favourable wind.

"XIV. The general-in-chief Kleber may send advices immediately to France, and the vessel that conveys them shall have the safe conduct necessary for securing the communication, by the said advices, to the French government, of the news of the evacuation of Egypt.

"XV. There being no doubt that the French army will stand in need of daily supplies of provisions during the three months in which it is to evacuate Egypt, and during other three months, reckoning from the day on which it is embarked, it is agreed, that it shall be supplied with the necessary quantities of corn, meat, rice, barley, and straw, according to a statement which shall be immediately given in by the French plenipo-

tentiaries, as well for the stay in the country as for the voyage. Whatever supplies the army shall draw from its magazines, after the ratification of the present convention, shall be deducted from those furnished by the Sublime Porte.

"XVI. Counting from the day of the ratification of the present treaty, the French army shall not raise any contribution in Egypt; on the contrary, it shall abandon to the Sublime Porte the ordinary leviable contributions which remain to it, to be levied after its departure, as well as the camels, dromedaries, ammunition, cannon, and other things which it shall not think necessary to carry away. The same shall be the case with the magazines of grain, arising from the contributions already levied, and the magazines of provisions. These objects shall be examined and valued by commissaries sent to Egypt by the Sublime Porte, and by the commander of the British forces, conjointly with those of the General-in-chief Kleber, and paid by the former, at the rate of the valuation so made, to the amount of three thousand purses, which will be necessary to the French army, for accelerating its movements and its embarkation; and if the objects above mentioned do not amount to this sum, the deficit shall be advanced by the Sublime Porte, in the form of a loan, which will be paid by the

French government upon the bills of the commissaries appointed by General-in-chief Kleber to receive the said sum.

"XVII. The French having expenses to incur in the evacuation of Egypt, it shall receive, after the ratification of the present convention, the sums stipulated, in the following order, viz. the fifteenth day and the twentieth day, five hundred purses; the fortieth day, the fiftieth, sixtieth, the seventieth, and eightieth day, three hundred purses; and finally, the ninetieth day, five hundred purses. All the said purses, of five hundred Turkish piastres each, shall be received in loan from the persons commissioned to this effect by the Sublime Porte; and in order to facilitate the execution of the said disposition, the Sublime Porte, immediately after the ratification of the convention, shall send commissaries to the city of Cairo, and to the other cities occupied by the armies.

"XVIII. The contributions which the French shall receive after the date of the ratification and before the notification of the present convention in the different parts of Egypt, shall be deducted from the amount of the three thousand purses above stipulated.

"XIX. In order to facilitate and accelerate the evacuation of the places, the navigation of

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"XXI. All the difficulties which may arise, and which shall not be provided for by the present convention, shall be amicably settled between commissioners, appointed for that purpose by his highness the Grand Vizier and the General-in-chief Kleber, in such a manner as to facilitate the evacuation.

"XXII. These presents shall not be effectual until after the respective ratifications, which are to be exchanged in eight days; after which, they shall be religiously observed on both sides.

"Done, signed, and sealed with our respective seals, &c., January 24, 1800.

"DESAIX, *General of Division*,
"POUSSIELGUE,
"*Plenipotentiaries of General Kleber.*

"MOUSTAFA RASCHID EFFENDI TESTERDAR,
"MOUSTAFA RASSICHE EFFENDI RIESSUL KNITAB,
"*Plenipotentiaries of his Highness the Supreme Vizier.*"

"A true copy, according to the French part transmitted to the Turkish Minister in exchange for their Turkish copy.

(Signed) "POUSSIELGUE,
"DESAIX.
(Countersigned) "KLEBER."

By these documents it will be seen that it was stipulated that the French army, with all its stores, artillery, baggage, &c., with the French ships of war and transports at Alexandria, should be permitted to return to France unmolested by the allied powers.

It is in the following manner that General Kleber justifies his conduct to the French nation. It will be seen, in a moment, how much he overstates the difficulties to which he was opposed.

"*Kleber, General-in-Chief of the Army of Egypt, to the Executive Directory of the French Republic.*

"*Camp of Salachich, January* 30.

"I have signed, citizens Directors, the treaty relative to the evacuation of Egypt, and I send you a copy of it. That which bears the signature of the Grand Vizier cannot reach this place for a few days, the exchange of signatures being to take place at El-Arisch.

"I have given you an account, in my former despatches, of the situation in which this army was placed. I have informed you also of the negociations which General Bonaparte had commenced with the Grand Vizier, and which I have

continued. Though at that time I had little dependence on the success of these negociations, I hoped that they would so far retard the march, and relax the preparations of the Grand Vizier, as to give you time to send me assistance in men or in arms, or, at least, orders respecting the disagreeable circumstances in which I was placed. I founded this hope of assistance upon my knowledge that the French and Spanish fleets were united at Toulon, and only wanted a favourable wind for sailing: they did indeed sail, but it was only to repass the Straits, and to return to Brest. This news was most distressing to the army, which learned, at the same time, our reverses in Italy, in Germany, in Holland, and even in La Vendée, without its appearing that any proper measure had been taken to arrest the course of the misfortunes which threatened even the existence of the republic.

" Meanwhile the Vizier advanced from Damascus. On another quarter, about the middle of October, a fleet appeared before Damietta. It disembarked about four thousand Janizaries, who were to be followed by an equal number, but time was not left for their arrival. The first were attacked, and completely defeated in less than half an hour: the carnage was terrible; more than eight hundred of them were made prisoners.

This event did not render the negociations more easy. The Vizier manifested the same intentions, and did not suspend his march any longer than was necessary for forming his establishments, and procuring the means of transporting his troops. His army was then estimated at sixty thousand men; but other pashas were following him, and were recruiting his army with new troops from all parts of Asia, as far as Mount Caucasus. The van of this army soon arrived at Jaffa.

" Commodore Sir Sidney Smith wrote me about this time, that is to say, some days before the debarkation of Damietta; and as I knew all the influence which he had over the Vizier, I thought it my duty not only to answer him, but even to propose to him, as a place for holding conferences, the ship which he commanded: I was equally repugnant to receiving in Egypt English or Turkish plenipotentiaries, or to sending mine to the camp of the latter. My proposition was accepted, and then the negociations assumed a more settled aspect. All this, however, did not stop the Ottoman army, which the Grand Vizier conducted towards Gaza.

" During all this time the war continued in Upper Egypt, and the Beys, hitherto dispersed, thought of joining themselves to Mourad, who, constantly defeated, alluring to his cause the

Arabs and the inhabitants of the province of Bennissoeuf, continued to keep some troops together, and to give disturbance. The plague also threatened us with its ravages, and already was weekly depriving us of several men at Alexandria and other places.

" On the 21st of December, General Desaix and citizen Pouisselgue, whom I had appointed plenipotentiaries, opened the conferences with Sir Sidney Smith, on board the Tigre, to whom the Grand Vizier had given power to treat. They were to have kept on the coast between Damietta and Alexandria, but a very violent gale of wind having obliged them to get into the open sea, they remained out at sea for eighteen days: at the end of this time they landed at the camp of the Vizier. He had advanced against El-Arisch, and had possessed himself, on the 30th of December, of that fort. This success was entirely owing to the remarkable cowardice of the garrison, which surrendered, without fighting, seven days after the attack. This event was so much the more unfortunate, as General Regnier was on his march to raise the blockade before the great body of the Turkish army had arrived.

" From that moment it was impossible to hope to protract the negociations to any length. It was necessary to examine maturely the danger of

breaking them off, to lay aside all motives of personal vanity, and not to expose the lives of all the Frenchmen entrusted to me, to the terrible consequences which farther delay would render inevitable.

" The most recent account stated the Turkish army to amount to eighty thousand men, and it must still have increased: there were in it twelve pashas, six of whom were of the first rank. Forty-five thousand men were before El-Arisch, having fifty pieces of cannon, and waggons in proportion: this artillery was drawn by mules. Twenty other pieces of cannon were at the gates of Gaza with the corps of reserve: the remainder of the troops were at Jaffa, and in the neighbourhood of Ramli. Active foraging parties supplied the Vizier's camp with provisions: all the tribes of the Arabs were emulous of assisting this army, and furnished it with more than fifteen thousand camels. I am assured that the distributions were regularly made. All these forces were directed by European officers, and from five to six thousand Russians were every moment expected.

" To this army I had to oppose eight thousand five hundred men, divided on the three points, Katich, Salachich, and Belbeys. This division was necessary, in order to facilitate our commu-

nications with Cairo, and in order to enable us to grant assistance speedily to the post which should be first attacked: in fact, it is certain that they all might have been turned or avoided. This is what Elfi Bey has recently done, who, during the negociations, entered with his Mamalukes into the Charkie, in order to join the Billis Arabs, and to rejoin Mourad in Upper Egypt. The remainder of the army was distributed as follows: one thousand men, under the command of General Verdier, formed the garrison of Lesbe, and were employed to raise contributions of money and provisions, and to keep in obedience the country between the canal of Achmoun and that of Moes, blindly directed by the sheik Leskam. Eighteen hundred men were under the command of General Lannes, to supply with provisions the garrisons of Alexandria, Aboukir, and Rosetta, to restrain the Delta and the Batrira. Twelve hundred men remained at Cairo and Gaza, and they were obliged to furnish escorts for the convoys of the army; and, finally, two thousand five hundred men were in Upper Egypt, on a chain of more than one hundred and fifty leagues in extent: they had daily to fight the Beys and their partisans. The whole formed fifteen thousand men. Such, in fact, estimating them at the highest, may be reckoned

the number of the disposable combatants in the army.

" Notwithstanding this disproportion of force, I would have hazarded a battle, if I had had the certainty of the arrival of succours before the season of a debarkation. But this season having once arrived without my receiving reinforcements, I should have been obliged to send five thousand men to the coasts. There would have remained to me three thousand men to defend a country, open on all parts, against an invasion of thirty thousand cavalry, seconded by the Arabs and the inhabitants, without a fortified place, without provisions, money, or ships. It behoved me to foresee this period, and to ask myself what I could then do for the preservation of the army. No means of safety remained; it would be impossible to treat, but with arms in our hands, with undisciplined hordes of barbarous fanatics, who despise all the laws of war: these motives affected every mind; they determined my opinion. I gave orders to my plenipotentiaries not to break off the negociations, unless the articles proposed tended to the sacrifice of our glory or our security.

" I finish this account, citizens Directors, by observing to you, that the circumstances of my situation were not foreseen in the instructions left

me by General Bonaparte. When he promised me speedy succours, he founded his hopes, as well as I did, upon the junction of the French and Spanish fleets in the Mediterranean: we were then far from thinking that these fleets would return into the ocean, and that the expedition of Egypt, entirely abandoned, would become a ground of accusation against those who had planned it. I annex to this letter a copy of my correspondence with the Grand Vizier, and with Sir Sidney Smith and my plenipotentiaries, and all the official notes sent on either side: I annex also a copy of the reports which have been given relative to the capture of El-Arisch.

"The French army, during its stay in Egypt, has engraved on the minds of the inhabitants the remembrance of its victories, that of the moderation and equity with which we have governed, and an impression of the strength and power of the nation by whom it was sent. The French name will be long respected, not only in this province of the Ottoman empire, but throughout all the East, and I expect to return to France with the army at the latest by the middle of June.

"Health and respect,

"KLEBER."

" *Kleber, Commander-in-Chief, to the Divan of Cairo, and to those of the different Provinces of Egypt.*

" *Head-quarters Salachich, February* 6.

" You have for a long time known the constant resolution of the French nation to preserve its ancient relations with the Ottoman empire. My illustrious predecessor, General Bonaparte, has often declared it to you since the circumstances of the war have induced us to visit this country. He neglected no measure to dissipate the apprehensions which had been infused into the Porte, led as it was to conclude an alliance equally contrary to its interests and ours. The explanation sent by him to the court of Constantinople failed in re-establishing so desirable an union; and the march of the Grand Vizier against Damascus having opened a more direct mode of communicating, he commenced negociations, and confided to me the task of terminating them, at the moment when affairs of superior interest obliged him to return to Europe. I have this day concluded them, and restore this country to the possession of our ancient ally. The re-establishment of the commerce of Egypt will be the first effect of the measure. The treaty shall be

the first clause of a peace, which is become necessary to the nations of the West."

When Lord Keith, the British commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, heard of these proceedings, he despatched the following letter to General Kleber:—

"*On board his Majesty's Ship the Queen Charlotte, June* 8, 1800.

"Sir, — I inform you that I have received positive orders from his Majesty not to consent to any capitulation with the French troops which you command in Egypt and Syria, at least unless they lay down their arms, surrender themselves prisoners of war, and deliver up all the ships and stores of the port of Alexandria to the allied powers.

"In the event of this capitulation, I cannot permit any of the troops to depart for France before they have been exchanged. I think it equally necessary to inform you, that all vessels having French troops on board, and sailing from this, with passports from others than those authorised to grant them, will be forced by the officers of the ships which I command to remain in Alexandria; in short, that ships which shall be met returning to Europe, with passports granted in

consequence of a particular capitulation with one of the allied powers, will be retained as prizes, and all individuals on board considered as prisoners of war.

(Signed) " KEITH."

Many very painful reflections will be suggested by this unfortunate and somewhat Thrasonical letter. It must have been excessively painful to Sir Sidney, and is not a little insulting to the Sublime Porte. It was as unwise as it was discourteous. It proved rife with the most disastrous consequences; and its errors, let them have originated where they might, were only expiated by some of the bravest and noblest of English blood. As it was in direct opposition to that excellent maxim which inculcates the providing of a golden bridge for a flying enemy, its results may be easily anticipated.

This ill-advised letter was given out in public orders to the French, with the following brief but soul-stirring remark from General Kleber.

" Soldiers! we know how to reply to such insolence by victories—prepare for battle.

(Signed) " KLEBER.

" The General of Division, Chief of the Staff,

(Signed) " DAMAS."

This imprudent disavowal of the acts of the allied Turkish and British commanders morally doubled the strength of the enemy. They immediately recommenced hostilities, and rapid and considerable advantages were gained over the Turks.

In the midst of these operations, orders arrived from the British cabinet to accede to the convention of El-Arisch. They were too late. The French had already made themselves masters of the strong posts in the country, and were now fully resolved to persevere in their original object—the complete conquest of Egypt, and the making it a French colony.

One of the earliest consequences of this mistaken policy was the defeat of the Turks at Elhanka, on which occasion eight thousand of them were left dead upon the field of battle.

We will briefly dismiss this affair by the insertion of two official letters, both of them explanatory in their way; the one from Sir Sidney Smith, the other from Lord Keith.

"*Sir Sidney Smith to Citizen Poussielgue, Administrator-General of the Finances.*

"*On board the Tigre, March* 8, 1800.

"I lost not a moment to repair to Alexandria, as soon as I could complete the provisioning of

my ships, in order to inform you in detail of the obstacles which my superiors have opposed to the execution of a convention such as I thought it my duty to agree to, not having received the instructions to the contrary, which reached Cyprus on the 22d of February, bearing date the 10th of January.

" As to myself, I should not hesitate to pass over any arrangement of an old date, in order to support what took place on the 24th and 31st of January; but it would be only throwing out a snare to my brave antagonists, were I to encourage them to embark. I owe it to the French army, and to myself, to acquaint them with the state of things, which, however, I am endeavouring to change. At any rate, I stand between them and the false impressions which have dictated a proceeding of this kind; and as I know the liberality of my superiors, I doubt not that I shall produce the same conviction on their minds that I feel myself, respecting the business which we concluded. A conversation with you would enable me to communicate the origin and nature of this restriction; and I propose that you should proceed, on board an English frigate, to the commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, who has newly arrived, in order to confer with him on the subject.

" I depend much on your abilities and conciliatory disposition, which facilitated our former agreement, in order again to support my reasonings respecting the impossibility of revoking what has been formally settled, after a detailed discussion and a mature deliberation. I then propose, sir, that you should come on board, in order to consult on what is to be done in the difficult circumstances in which we are placed. I view with calmness the heavy responsibility to which I am subject; my life is at stake—I know it; but I should prefer an unmerited death to the preservation of my existence, by exposing both my life and my honour.

" I have the honour to be, with perfect consideration and high esteem, sir, your very humble servant,

(Signed) " W. Sidney Smith."

This is candid, upright, and honourable; and, although a little too much worded for effect in the latter part, is just such an epistle that we might expect from one of Sir Sidney's chivalrous character.

M. Poussielgue went on his philanthropical mission, first writing the following letter.

Letter from Citizen Poussielgue to Lord Keith.

" *On board the Constance,* 13 *Germinal, (April* 19.)

" My Lord,—At the moment of quitting Egypt to return to France, in virtue of the convention signed at El-Arisch, I learned at Alexandria the obstacles which your orders had raised to the execution of that convention, although it had already been partly carried into effect, with that good faith which the candour of the contracting parties must have inspired.

" I resolved to proceed directly to you, my lord, to request you to revoke your orders. I wish to explain to you all the motives that should induce you to adopt this measure; or, if you cannot consent to what I desire to solicit, that you will immediately send me to France, in order that the French government may treat directly with the English government on this affair.

" The lives of fifty thousand men are at stake, who may be destroyed without any motive, since, according to the solemn treaty made with the English, Russians, and Turks, all hostilities had terminated.

" I have not powers *ad hoc* for the step I have taken; but there is no necessity for claiming what would be considered as a right between nations the least civilised. The demand appears

to me so just and so simple, and besides so urgent, that I have not thought it necessary to wait for the orders of General Kleber, who, I am certain, would not consent to the smallest modification of the treaty, though his fidelity in executing it has rendered his position much less advantageous.

"At the moment we concluded the convention at El-Arisch, under the simple pledge of English good faith, we were far from suspecting that obstacles would be started from that same power, the most liberal of those with whom we had to treat.

"For the rest, my lord, I am not a military character, and all my functions have ceased. Two years of fatigue and sickness have rendered my return to my country indispensable. I aspire only to repose with my wife and children, happy if I can carry to the families of the French I left in Egypt the news that you have removed the only obstacle to their return.

(Signed) "POUSSIELGUE."

The following is Lord Keith's explanation, dated April 25th.

Lord Keith's Answer.

"*Minotaur, April* 25.

"I have this day received the letter which you

have done me the honour to write. I have to inform you, that I have given no orders or authority against the observance of the convention between the Grand Vizier and General Kleber, having received no orders on this head from the king's ministers. Accordingly I was of opinion, that his Majesty should take no part in it; but since the treaty has been concluded, his Majesty, being desirous of showing his respect for his allies, I have received instructions to allow a passage to the French troops, and I lost not a moment in sending to Egypt orders to permit them to return to France without molestation. At the same time I thought it my duty to my king, and those of his allies whose states lie in the seas through which they are to pass, to require that they should not return in a mass, nor in ships of war, nor in armed ships. I wished likewise that the cartel should carry no merchandise, which would be contrary to the law of nations. I have likewise asked of General Kleber his word of honour, that neither he nor his army should commit any hostilities against the coalesced powers; and I doubt not that General Kleber will find the conditions perfectly reasonable.

" Captain Hay has received my orders to allow you to proceed to France with the adjutant-general Cambis, as soon as he arrives at Leghorn.

(Signed) " KEITH."

This letter contrasts strangely with the former one from his lordship to General Kleber; but we discover by it that he wished it to be understood that he acted on his own notions of his duty to his king, in disavowing the convention of El-Arisch.

Notwithstanding the combined successes of General Kleber and his army, he still found his and their situation so harassing, that he was willing to agree to a renewal of the terms formerly accepted by the Grand Vizier and Sir Sidney Smith, for the evacuation of Egypt; and Lord Keith being now authorised to accede to them, all obstacles seemed to have been satisfactorily removed. But all these good dispositions were rendered of no avail by the assassination of General Kleber on the 15th of June. This event will be best detailed by transcribing General Menou's letter to Sir Sidney Smith.

Letter from General Menou to Sir Sidney Smith, informing him of the Assassination of General Kleber, and of his having taken upon himself the chief command.

"J. Menou, General in Chief, to Sir Sidney Smith, Commander of his Britannic Majesty's ship of war the Tigre.

"*Head-quarters at Cairo, 1 Messidor (June 19), Year 8 of the French Republic, one and indivisible.*

"SIR,—I have received the letter which you did me the honour of writing to me, under date of the 9th of June, from on board the Tigre, off Rhodes. Since the French army is deprived of its leader, by the atrocious assassination of the General-in-chief Kleber, I have taken upon myself the command of it. Your allies the Turks not having been able to conquer the French near Malarich, they have, to be revenged, made use of the dagger, which is only resorted to by cowards. A Janissary, who had quitted Gaza about forty-two days ago, had been sent to perpetrate the horrid deed. The French willingly believe the Turks only to have been guilty. The account of the murder shall be communicated to every nation, for all are equally interested in avenging it. The behaviour which you, sir, observed, with regard to the convention at El-Arisch, points out to me the road which I have to pursue. You demanded the ratification of your court: I must also demand that of the counsels who now govern the French nation, for any treaty that might be concluded with the English and their allies. This is the only legal way, the only one admissible in any negociations that may ever take place. As

well as you, sir, I abhor the flames of war; as well as you, I wish to see an end put to the misery which it has caused. But I shall never, in any point whatever, exempt myself from what the honour of the French republic and of her arms requires. I am fully convinced that these sentiments must also be yours. Good faith and morality must prevail in treaties concluded between nations. The French republicans know not those stratagems which are mentioned in the papers of Mr. Mories. They know not any other behaviour than courage during the combat, magnanimity after the victory, and good faith in their treaties.

"One hundred and fifty Englishmen are prisoners of war here;* had I followed only the dictates of republican magnanimity, I would have sent them back, without considering them as prisoners, for they were taken on the coast of Egypt, not with arms in their hands, and I am fully convinced that the consuls would have approved of it; but your allies have detained citizen and chief of brigade Baudet, adjutant of General Kleber, whose person ought to have been held sacred, as he had been sent with a flag of truce. Contrary to my principles and my inclination, I have, therefore, been forced to reprisals against

* Alluding to the officers and crew of H. M. ship Centurion, which was wrecked on the cost.

your countrymen; but they shall be set at liberty immediately on the arrival of citizen Baudet at Damietta, who shall there be exchanged against Mustapha Pasha, and several other Turkish commissaries. If, sir, as I have no doubt, you have some influence over your allies, this affair will soon be settled, which interests your honour, and evidently endangers one hundred and fifty of your countrymen. I have the honour to repeat to you, sir, that with enthusiastic pleasure I shall see the termination of a war which has, for so long a period, agitated the whole world. The French and English nations are destined mutually to esteem, not to destroy one another; but when they enter into negociations with each other, it must only be done on conditions which are equally honourable to both, and promotive of their welfare. Receive, sir, the very sincere assurances of my esteem and high respect.

" I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) " ABDALLAH BEY, J. MENOU."

This letter is certainly to the purpose, and just what might have been expected after so unhappy an event. It shows, also, the habitual respect in which our officer was held by his stern and desperate foes. It produced the following conciliatory and amicable answer.

Letter from Sir Sidney Smith to General Menou, Commander-in-Chief of the French Army in Egypt; originally written in French; dated Jaffa, June 22, 1800.

"GENERAL,—I received this evening the letter which you did me the honour of writing to me on the 20th instant. At the instant when I expected to see General Kleber, under the most favourable and satisfactory auspices, I learned, with the liveliest concern and the most heartfelt sorrow, his tragical fate. I immediately communicated the intelligence to the Grand Vizier and the Ottoman ministers, in the terms in which you announced to me that sad event; and nothing less than the certainty and detail with which you communicated it, could have induced their excellencies to credit the information. The Grand Vizier has declared to me, formally and officially, that he had not the slightest knowledge of those who had been guilty of the assassination; and I am persuaded that his declaration is true and sincere. Without entering into the particulars of this unfortunate event, I shall content myself with answering the articles of your letter that relate to our affairs.

"If the Grand Vizier has detained in his camp the aide-de-camp Baudet, despatched to him at

Jebli-il-Illam, it was because his excellency did not think proper to suffer any person to quit his camp at the moment when he saw himself surrounded by his enemies. Baudet was detained at Jebil-il-Illam in the same manner as the Turkish officers destined to serve reciprocally with him as hostages were detained at Cairo.

"This aide-de-camp was sent to the Ottoman squadron to be exchanged, according to your desire; and during that interval, his excellency the Captain Pacha having arrived here, the exchange was postponed in consequence of his absence from the squadron. When his excellency shall have joined the squadron, the exchange may be carried into effect, should you think proper, as the aide-de-camp Baudet is off Alexandria; but I cannot perceive why you make the release of one hundred and fifty English, who were shipwrecked at Cape Brulos, depend upon a transaction relating only to yourself and the Porte. I expect from your good faith and your justice, according to the regulations settled between both nations relative to the reciprocal exchange of our prisoners, which we are authorised to enforce, that you will allow Captain Buttal, his officers and crew, to return.

"Your promises expressive of the hope of reciprocity on my part cannot apply to this circum-

stance, and I think it superfluous to offer you in return the assurance of my good offices in favour of any person who may be reduced to the painful situation which I have myself experienced. I am convinced that the Grand Vizier will sanction with his generous and dignified approbation all the humane proceedings which we may adopt with respect to one another. The tricks of warfare are unknown to us both, and while I shall continue to behave to you with the same candour and the same good faith which I have manifested to the present moment, I shall earnestly employ all my means to prevent any person on whom I may possess influence from pursuing a contrary line of conduct. Be assured that the hostile dispositions which have been recently announced, and which have acquired extent and publicity, may be appeased by the opportunities furnished to both parties by the present circumstances of mutual correspondence and communication, and that we shall at length be united by the ties of sincere friendship. In the mean time we shall prosecute hostilities against you with the means which we have hitherto employed against you, and we shall endeavour to render ourselves worthy of the esteem of your brave troops.

"The hostilities which you have committed without waiting for Admiral Keith's answer, who

was unacquainted with the convention concluded for the evacuation of Egypt, have furnished us with a rule for our conduct. I had not demanded of my court the ratification of the convention; I merely was desirous to remove some obstacles that might have opposed the return of the French to their country.

"As General Kleber did not, in the late preliminaries which were agreed to, give us to understand that it was necessary the treaty which was to have followed them should be ratified by the consuls, this condition now introduced by you in your preliminaries has the appearance of a refusal to evacuate Egypt, and the Grand Vizier has commissioned me to require of you, on that head, a clear and precise answer. You wish, as I do, for a termination of the war which desolates the whole world.

"It is in your power to remove one of the obstacles in the way of peace, by evacuating Egypt according to the terms agreed upon with General Kleber; and if you refuse, we shall exert all our means, and those of our allies, in order to compel you to accept conditions which may not prove so advantageous. I cannot suppress my regret at being forced to fulfil that duty; but the evacuation of Egypt being an object of so much interest to the cause of humanity,

the mode of accomplishing it by correspondence and conference is still open.

"As the admiral, under whose orders I am, is at a considerable distance, I am authorised to agree to such arrangements as the necessity of circumstances may dictate; and although, from the nature of events, I am not warranted in offering any new proposition, I am, however, ready and disposed to receive all those which you may think fit to make. I can declare to you officially that I shall exert all my efforts to prevent any rash proceedings, and to oppose all vexatious measures, from whatever quarter they may arise.

"I shall literally adhere to all the instructions of my court. I know its principles to be founded upon the most punctilious equity and the most perfect good faith. My conduct shall be conformable to its principles, and all my exertions shall be directed to the performance of my duty, by promoting its interests.

"As it is not yet decided in what direction I am about to act, I beg you will transmit me your answer in two despatches, the one addressed to Alexandria, and the other to Jaffa, at the camp of the Grand Vizier.

(Signed) "SIDNEY SMITH."

We now proceed to subjoin another despatch from Menou to Bonaparte, as it goes more into particulars concerning this atrocious transaction.

"*Menou, Provisional General-in-Chief, to Citizen Bonaparte, First Consul of the Republic.*

"*Head-quarters at Cairo, 14th Messidor, (July 3.)*

"CITIZEN CONSUL,—A horrible event, of which there are few examples in history, has provisionally raised me to the command of the army of the East. General Kleber was assassinated on the 25th of last month (June 14.) A wretch, sent by the Aga of the Janissaries of the Ottoman army, gave the general-in-chief four stabs with a poniard, while he was walking with citizen Protain, the architect, on the terrace which looks from the garden of the head-quarters into the square of Esbekier. Citizen Protain, in endeavouring to defend the general, received himself six wounds. The first wound which Kleber received was mortal. He fell—Protain still lives. The general, who was giving orders for repairing the head-quarters and the garden,* had no aide-de-camp with him, nor any individual of the corps of guards: he had desired to be alone: he was found expiring. The assassin, who was dis-

* The head-quarters had been damaged by cannon-shot during the siege.

covered in the midst of a heap of ruins, being brought to the head-quarters, confessed that he was solicited to commit this crime by the aga of the Janissaries of the Ottoman army, commanded by the Grand Vizier in person. This vizier, unable to vanquish the French in open warfare, has sought to avenge himself by the dagger, a weapon which belongs only to cowards. The assassin is named Soleyman-el-Alepi. He came from Aleppo, and had arrived at Cairo, after crossing the Desert on a dromedary. He took up his lodging at the grand mosque Eleaser, whence he proceeded every day to watch a favourable opportunity for committing his crime. He had entrusted his secret to four petty cheiks of the law, who wished to dissuade him from his project; but who, not having denounced him, have been arrested, in consequence of the depositions of the assassin, condemned to death, and executed on the 28th of last month (June 17). I appointed to conduct the trial a commission *ad hoc*. The commission, after conducting the trial with the utmost solemnity, thought it proper to follow the customs of Egypt in the application of the punishment. They condemned the assassin to be impaled, after having his right hand burnt; and three of the guilty cheiks to be beheaded, and their bodies burnt. The fourth, not having been

arrested, was outlawed. I annex, citizen consul, the different papers relative to the trial.

"At present, citizen consul, it would be proper to make you acquainted with the events, almost incredible, that have occurred in Egypt; but I must first have the honour of informing you, that General Kleber's papers not being yet in order, I can only inform you of those events by a simple reference to the date of the transactions. When circumstances are more favourable, I shall send you the details."

Napoleon thus pays his tribute to the high sense of honour and the right-mindedness of our hero on this very important and delicate business. " He manifested great honour in sending immediately to Kleber the refusal of Lord Keith to ratify the treaty, *which saved the French army.* If he had kept it secret for seven or eight days longer, Cairo would have been given up to the Turks, and the French army necessarily been obliged to surrender to the English."

There is much of grandeur in this conduct of Sir Sidney. All the temptations lay adversely to his high sense of honour. We believe that his conduct, had he sacrificed the French army, would have met applause and reward from his superiors at home. In the agitated state of the

public feeling, it would have wonderfully increased his popularity; and the abstraction of so many thousand well-tried veterans from the force opposed to his country would have been, though dishonourably obtained, a real and substantial good. All the *ad captandum* advantages were on the side, not of a treachery, but merely of the permitting one by others, and that, too, well disguised under diplomatic forms. All these considerations he resisted—he saved the French army, but at the same time he saved his country's honour, and advanced his own.

During these momentous concerns, in which Sir Sidney acted so conspicuous, and often the principal part, he found time to exercise his private benevolence. Having been apprized that a young man of the name of Thevenard was among the miserable captives held by the Turks, and knowing that his father was a person of the highest respectability at Toulon, he interested himself successfully for his release. Sir Sidney also provided for his safe conveyance from Rhodes; and, on his arrival, sent him the following characteristic note of invitation.

"*On board the Tigre, June 15th*, 1800.

"Mr. Thevenard is requested to come and dine with Sir Sidney Smith on board the Tigre,

this day at three o'clock. Sir Sidney takes the liberty to send some clothes, which he supposes a person just escaped from prison may require. The great-coat is not of the best; but, excepting English naval uniforms, it is the only one on board the Tigre, and the same Sir Sidney Smith wore during his journey from the Temple till he reached the sea. It will have done good service if it again serves a similar purpose, by restoring another son to the arms of his aged father dying with chagrin."

Sir Sidney's kindness did not stop here. He generously completed the good work that he had begun, by supplying him with money and all kind of necessaries, together with a recommendation to his brother, the minister at Constantinople, and to several other persons of respectability in that city.

CHAPTER XVII.

The conduct of Sir Sidney Smith considered respecting his concurrence with the convention of El-Arisch—Parliamentary proceedings upon it—Short speech of his late Majesty William IV.

HAVING brought down our narrative of these transactions to this epoch, it becomes a duty to us to look at home, and see in what light these transactions were viewed by those who possessed the right and the ability to decide upon them. The question very naturally resolved itself into two distinct interrogatories. Firstly, had Sir Sidney Smith the power to do that which he did? and, secondly, without reference to his authority, was that which he did done well?

It is notorious that the ministry and Mr. Pitt, with a great proportion of the nation, believed that the terms granted to General Kleber were altogether too lenient; and that he and his army

must, in the nature of events, have been shortly compelled to surrender at discretion. Men's minds were too rashly led to this conclusion, because, by an accident, a packet of letters, directed from Kleber's army to the French government, was, about this juncture, intercepted, which letters, purporting to describe the actual state of the French army in Egypt and Syria, were of such a nature as to induce the persuasion that the enemy could by no means sustain his post, and that the troops were upon the eve of a complete disorganisation: and also because that Sir Sidney Smith having performed great deeds, impossibilities were expected at his hands, thus being made a martyr to his own superior merits.

Thus prepared to prejudge the question, it was angrily asked, had Sir Sidney the authority to conclude a convention, apparently so unwise, if not altogether treacherous to the best interests of his country?

This momentous subject led to the following proceedings in the House of Commons:—

Mr. T. Jones begged the attention of the house to the subject of the evacuation of Egypt; a subject to which he had already called that attention last session, and which had now become, by the incapacity of his Majesty's ministers, the bone of contention between England and

France, and the stumbling-block of peace. From the correspondence on the table, it was evident that those counsels which opposed the evacuation of Egypt by the invading army, presented a very serious obstacle to the conclusion, and even to the negociation of a peace. Of the two points most insisted on by France, and which operated as impediments to peace, one was the demand of sending succours to Egypt; and it remained for the House to inquire, why that difficulty had not been precluded, by accepting the terms of the convention agreed on by General Kleber and the Grand Vizier, and guaranteed by the sanction of a general officer? Mr. Jones, after six motions that he had made on the 23d of July, last session, on the subject of the evacuation of Egypt, were read by the clerk, said, that the object of his motion this day would be, the production of a letter, on the subject of which almost the whole of the voluminous correspondence which he held in his hand turned. Having read a number of extracts from the correspondence, and particularly Lord Grenville's instruction to Mr. Hammond, for holding a conference with Mr. Otto, on the subject of the proposed armistice between Great Britain and France, he asked if Sir Sidney Smith was not joined with his brother Mr. Spencer Smith, as joint plenipotentiary of Great

Britain at the court of Constantinople? Had he not power to treat at Acre? Did not ministers know that, in conjunction with the Bashaw Ghezzar, Sir Sidney offered to convey the French out of Egypt, individually or in the aggregate? Did his Majesty's ministers, previous to January 24, 1800, countermand the orders under which, it was presumed, he acted from the beginning of May in the preceding year, as if not warranted in his conduct? Did they, to prevent a repetition of such conduct, express their anger within the eight following months, or even some time after he had acceded to the convention? Did not Lord Elgin, before and since the present year, instruct Sir Sidney Smith to get the French out of Egypt by all possible means? Was not the intention of the court of London, not to ratify the original treaty, sent immediately to General Kleber in the first instance? Ought it not to have been sent to the French general through Sir Sidney Smith? Ought not our ally, the Ottoman Porte, to have had the earliest notice? And farther, did not La Constance galley deliver the letter of Lord Keith, first to Kleber at Alexandria, and then proceed with the same instructions to Sir Sidney, who was on duty at Cyprus? What was the consequence? Did not eight or nine thousand of our good allies

perish in the field? Was not the very existence of the Ottoman government threatened at its centre? In Mr. Hammond's letter to Lord Grenville, after the conference with Mr. Otto, which letter referred, almost in every line, to Egypt, there was this particular assertion, "Mr. Otto added, that he would not conceal from me, that the reinforcement which France intended to send to Egypt amounted to twelve hundred men, and that the supply of military stores consisted chiefly of ten thousand muskets. The language of Mr. Otto, in this part of our conversation, and of Mr. Talleyrand's letter, appeared to me to be so decisive and peremptory, that I was induced to ask of him, distinctly, whether I was to understand that this stipulation was a point from which the French government would not recede? Mr. Otto replied, that, in his opinion, the French government would not recede from it." Mr. Jones having recapitulated the whole of the correspondence, moved, "That the letter alluded to in General Kleber's letter to the Kaimakan of the Sublime Porte, be now laid on the table of that House."

Mr. Pitt replied, that it would be hardly possible for his Majesty's ministers to comply with the object of the present motion. It would be a very difficult thing for government to undertake

for the production of a letter referred to in one from General Kleber to the Kaimakan, even supposing the representation given of it to be true, and the description of it in the motion proper, which it was not. But the answer he had to give to the reasoning of the honourable gentleman was exceedingly short. The motion appeared to be altogether unnecessary. He was not aware of any good end that could be answered, nor of any blame that could be fixed on ministers, in consequence of a French general being referred to a letter, which evidently, on the face of the transaction, must have been written before government was acquainted with the convention alluded to having been signed by any British officer. The letter, therefore, could not state any new fact: nor had Mr. Jones offered anything in addition to what he had urged unsuccessfully in the last session of Parliament. As soon as it was known in England that the French general had the faith of a British officer pledged to him, and was disposed to act upon it, instructions were sent out to have the convention executed, though the officer in question had, in fact, no authority to sign it. The contents of Lord Keith's letter were far from being a secret. It was printed, quoted, and universally known in July last, when Mr. Jones brought forward a question on the

same subject, which the House thought proper to negative. The next thing for the House to consider was, in what manner the present subject was connected with the late correspondence between France and this country relative to an armistice. By the observations accompanying the motion, it was shown that, in making the proposal, the French government meant to derive great advantage from the relief it might be enabled to send both to Malta and Egypt; a relief which it could not hope for, while our fleets and armies pursued their operations against them: and thus it was evident that France set great value on reinforcing those places, which we had an equal interest in preventing them from doing. As we had, since the convention of El-Arisch, taken Malta from the enemy, we were, in a degree proportionate to the importance of that island, masters of preventing them from sending any reinforcements to Egypt, the maritime places of which were, besides, blocked by our fleets. So far then it was plain, that, in respect to Egypt, France was not on higher ground, now that we were in possession of Malta, than it was at the time when General Kleber first entered into the capitulation. And he could not conceive what it was that gentlemen thought they could complain of. When Parliament considered the conduct of

his Majesty's ministers, in refusing to acquiesce in a convention which they did not know to have had the sanction of a British officer, it should discuss that conduct with a reference to what was the state of Kleber's army at the time; with a reference to the condition of the war in Italy at the beginning of the campaign, when it was extremely doubtful whether the issue might be favourable to one side or the other; and most of all, in this doubtful state of the termination of the contest, with a reference to the effect which such a reinforcement as that of the army of Egypt might be likely, under all the circumstances, to have on the war on the continent.

Mr. Grey, in answer to these positions, respecting the position of Kleber's army, the state of the belligerent armies in Italy, and the existing circumstances of the war, all together, said, that the present motion did not preclude the consideration of any of these topics, but only asked for such information as would enable the House to judge of Admiral Keith's instructions. It was not to be supposed that the present motion would stand alone, but, if carried, be followed by others of a more comprehensive nature. With respect to Sir Sidney Smith's powers, it was not necessary for him to be specially instructed, either to sanction or to reject a conven-

tion. Sir Sidney was the British officer commanding on the spot. And nothing was more undeniable, than that every military commandant had power to accept any stipulations which his prudence might direct him to agree to with the enemy, without having any special authority for the purpose. On such occasions, government were bound, in good faith, to admit what their officers stipulated: and, if it were otherwise, the consequences would be subversive of those principles on which war was now conducted between civilised nations. On these and other grounds, Mr. Grey defended the propriety and the necessity of the motion: which he considered as a preliminary step to further inquiry into the conduct of ministers on this important and interesting subject. Mr. Grey's observations on the powers of Sir Sidney Smith were supported by Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Tierney, and Mr. Hobhouse. Mr. Sheridan observed, that the House of Commons could not, without a neglect of its duty, omit entering into an inquiry into the matter before them: for he held it as a principle, which should never be lost sight of, that when an officer, either general or admiral, was employed, to take it for granted, that whatever such an officer did in name and on the behalf of the country he served, was done according to his instructions,

until the contrary was proved ; otherwise nations could never confide in any proposal.—Mr. Tierney said, that it was a part of the national compact to regard officers under government, abroad upon service in time of war, as having a certain portion of power, to be exercised according to their discretion, for the purpose of alleviating, or perhaps putting an end to, the horrors of war. What was observed by Mr. Hobhouse, had a reference to what had been asserted by Mr. Pitt, who had spoken a second time in explanation, on the present subject.—Mr. Pitt said, that, before the order to Lord Keith went out, there was no supposition that Sir Sidney Smith was then in Egypt, nor that he would be a party to the treaty between the Ottoman Porte and the French general. When he did take a part in that transaction, it was not a direct part. He did not exercise any direct power: if he had done so, he would have done it without authority. He had no such power from his situation : for he was not commander-in-chief. Large powers, for obvious reasons, must be given to the commander-in-chief, subject to the discretion of the person with whom they were intrusted. But that neither was nor ought to be the case with every officer of inferior station. Such person, however great his talents, should not go beyond a specified point ; for

otherwise he might treat for whole provinces, and counteract his superior in command.—Mr. Hobhouse observed, that if even a subordinate officer, intrusted with the direction of a particular enterprise, entered, as Sir Sidney Smith had done, into a convention, which, strictly speaking, he had no powers to conclude, many examples could be found, of cases in which the commander-in-chief thought himself bound to ratify what the subordinate officer had done, and in which government had ratified the consent of the commanding officer. Was not this the case at Cape Nicola Mole, when General Whitelock, though a subordinate officer, without any specific powers, and without the consent of the commander-in-chief, agreed to a convention which General Williamson, the commander-in-chief, afterwards thought himself bound to ratify, and which was afterwards ratified by government? An objection had been made to the form in which the motion was worded. This, indeed, Mr. Hobhouse did not think quite so accurate, and recommended it to his honourable friend to make some alteration in it.

Mr. Yorke, after observing that the motion was not of a parliamentary form, because Parliament could have no power over a letter which must be in the possession of General Kleber, ex-

pressed his astonishment that any one could have the confidence to say, in that house, that the British fleet was in the least degree injured by that which took place, on our behalf, in Egypt; and that the more especially, after we had been in possession of the intercepted French correspondence on that subject.

Mr. Percival said, that the English, after the orders from government had been communicated to them by Lord Keith, had done nothing to break the treaty. The English committed no act of hostility. But the French, on receiving the communication from Lord Keith, had chosen to break it themselves. If there was any breach of faith, it was on the side of the French. When government heard that the French had trusted and acted on the belief that this country would consent to the convention, it sent out orders not to ratify, but to respect it. With regard to the motion before the House, he could not recollect that he had ever heard one supported by less argument. He readily allowed that the publication of a letter was not a sufficient means of information for the purpose of founding on it any specific motion. But, if this was the intention, the supporters of the motion ought to have argued from the contents of the letter, that it would afford ground on which to rest a motion.

Mr. Jones, as a proof that this country was a party in the convention of El-Arisch, stated, that it was an article in this, that passports should be given to the French by the Porte, and by its allies, Russia and England. "As to the form of the motion," said Mr. Jones, "I am prepared. On such occasions as these I generally go doubly armed, and now move, That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, that he will be graciously pleased to give directions that copies of all letters from the commander-in-chief of the fleet in the Mediterranean to General Kleber be laid on the table of this house." This motion was rejected by eighty noes against twelve ayes.

Lord Holland also failed in the Upper House to bring this matter in full light, his motion being negatived by twelve votes to two.

Mr. Pitt, in his speech, distinctly avers that Sir Sidney Smith had no authority to sign the treaty—a sentence that must convey a severe condemnation upon the conduct of that officer. The question then is, what authority had he?—did he possess the usual powers of a plenipotentiary—or were those powers so circumscribed, that for every delicate conjunction of circumstances—when slaughter that ought to have been stopped was going forward—when the miseries

of a whole friendly nation, that ought immediately to have been alleviated, were increasing—was he, thus situated, to wait for months for instructions? Common sense decides in the negative. Even the ordinary powers of a commanding officer on the spot were, in our opinion a sufficient justification for the course that he adopted.

Well, we will grant, that neither as a plenipotentiary fully accredited, nor as a commander-in-chief fully endowed with the usual discretionary powers, had he authority to sign the convention. But was he, was Great Britain, the only parties to it? Who were the most concerned? Against whom did the sharp edge of war come in actual contact? Whose provinces were occupied? whose subjects plundered and slain? The Sultan's—an independent sovereign of himself, perfectly competent and free, by his proper ministers, without the sanction of the British government, to make what treaty or convention he pleased, that was not, according to the terms of his alliance with England, an actual peace with the enemy. Such a justifiable convention he made to rid his provinces of a consuming host, and his diadem of a galling insult; and Sir Sidney Smith did no more than agree to the act on the part of his own government. What a mockery to say that he had not full powers to do so small a thing!

But we now come to the second category; and in that Sir Sidney stands in a still more triumphant light. What he did was eminently well done, and the undoing of it very nearly proved the undoing of England's pre-eminence on the southern shores of the Mediterranean; for, after the loss of some of our best generals, and many of our best officers, together with a dreadful slaughter of some of our bravest troops, our authorities at home were obliged to do tardily, and not very gloriously, that which Sir Sidney Smith had before done, with honour to himself and with glory to the English name, without, in the slightest manner, committing an outrage upon humanity.

It was this transaction that called forth, some time after, the honourable testimony to the great merits of Sir Sidney Smith, from one from whom eulogium must at all times have been most gratifying and distinguishing: we mean the good, the philanthropic, and the pious Mr. Wilberforce. After mentioning our gallant officer's exploit at Acre, in which he observes, "that if he, Sir Sidney, had had with him regular officers of engineers, he must have reported the place untenable and abandoned it," he goes on to state, that "the extraordinary achievements of that gallant officer had been but ill requited,"—with many observations to the same effect.

Mr. Wilberforce spoke truly. Sir Sidney Smith was not adequately rewarded. The peerage was, at that time, plentifully lavished upon individuals who required that distinction to make them stand apart from their fellow men—Sir Sidney Smith did not.

As we have been just reverting to parliamentary proceedings, it may not be misplaced to mention that our late sovereign, William IV., when Duke of Clarence, thus spoke of Sir Sidney in the House of Peers:—"The first important check which the formidable army of French invaders met, was from a handful of British troops, under Sir Sidney Smith, long before the landing of the army which became, in their turn, the conquerors of Egypt."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Sir Sidney Smith's personal appearance at this time—His humanity to his crews—The English government sends reinforcements to Egypt—The state of the country—English land at Aboukir Bay—Battle of Alexandria—Death of Sir Ralph Abercromby.

BEFORE we proceed further in these Memoirs, we shall briefly state the appearance of their subject at this juncture. It is a very natural curiosity, that of being anxious to be acquainted with the looks and bearing of those who have been able, by their merits, to stand separate from their fellow men. But alas! man is still more variable in his physical than in his mental identity. The portrait of the youth of fourteen presents but little similitude to the man at the mature age of thirty, and the virility of thirty would look with disgust upon the lineaments of the same individual when he had numbered the average years allotted to humanity, three score and ten.

We have described Sir Sidney Smith's appearance as the fresh, amiable, and rosy-cheeked boy. We now, upon the testimony of one who was in daily communication with him, portray him in the vigour of his manhood, shortly after he had effected the expulsion of the French from Acre. Then, though small in stature, he had all the appearances that indicate a brave and generous hearted man, with a fine dark countenance, and eyes that sparkled with intelligence. His very appearance showed that he possessed an ardent imagination, which naturally prompted him to form and execute bold and important enterprises: he seemed, as it were, to be born to deserve glory and to acquire it.

This testimony to the dignity of his presence is from a Frenchman, and, so far as his public character was concerned, an enemy; and as the narrator was allowed, on all hands, to be a person of probity and honour, we must place implicit belief that he has put upon record the actual impression that Sir Sidney Smith made upon him.

But let us have recourse to other and less refined evidence. It is that of a worthy old Greenwich pensioner, who held an office about our officer's person, and who had the fullest opportunities of seeing him in all situations and in all moods, in full dress, in undress, and in no dress

at all, and such is nearly the words of the veteran.

" Why, sir, after we skivered the mounseers away from Acre, Sir Sidney was looking as taut set up as the mainstay by a new first lieutenant; but, for all that, Sir Sidney was a weaselly man, —no hull, sir,—none; but all head, like a tadpole. But such a head! it put you in mind of a flash of lightning rolled up into a ball; and then his black curly nob—when he shook it, it made every man shake in his shoes."

" Was he then handsome?"

" Blest if I can tell! You know, sir, as how we don't say of an eighteen-pounder, when it strikes the mark at a couple of miles or so, that's handsome, but we sings out ' beautiful;' though, arter all, it's nothing but a lump of black iron. You're laughing, sir. And so you thinks I'm transmogrifying Sir Sidney's head into a round lump of iron shot! Well, I'm off like one. All I can say is, that he was most handsome when there was the most to do."

This worthy old sailor's notions of the line of beauty being rather tortuous, we have only to endeavour to reconcile the two accounts, which may be done by the single word " soul." It predominated in the expression of his features, and that, we conceive, is the noblest kind of beauty.

At the time of which we write, the use of the

cat-o'-nine-tails was general throughout the navy, and as lavish as it was general. It therefore highly redounds to the humanity as well as to the good sense of Sir Sidney, that he was very sparing of the revolting infliction, but rarely having recourse to this brutal *ultima ratio* of naval commanders; and, when compelled to it by absolute necessity, never inflicting more than twenty-four lashes at one punishment. He had gained the entire confidence, and, though the word looks a little effeminate, we must add, the affection of all those who were so happy as to serve under him. Sir Sidney appears to have been distasteful only to those superior officers placed in command immediately over him.

Having thus been a little diffuse upon that which is merely personal to our celebrated commander, we must now proceed to trace the splendid course of his services, which in order the more fully to appreciate, we must turn our attention to the state of Egypt after the flight of Bonaparte, and the atrocious assassination of General Kleber. At this time, the fair average of the French troops occupying Egypt was twenty-six thousand men, with something more than eleven hundred Greek and Copt auxiliaries. In this average must be included sailors acting with the forces, commissioned and non-commissioned

officers, the sick, the artillery, the commissariat, and every description of persons attached to the army.

This force was at once both dispirited and exasperated; for, pining for their homes, and being deprived of the stimulus of spirituous liquors, they could hardly be prevailed upon to work on the fortifications, or even to throw up the necessary entrenchments for the safety of the posts of the army, yet, remembering the supposed injuries that they had received at the hands of the English, they were prepared to and actually did fight, when the occasion offered itself, like so many furies.

We know it to be admitted on all hands that General Menou had not the force of character or the martial intelligence of his predecessors in command. The dispositions for the defence of Egypt have been severely animadverted upon, and very generally condemned. He should have, before he thus dared the enmity of the English, either have possessed more military strength, or have been conscious of more military talent, before he attempted to wield it.

Whatever was the cause of all the misunderstandings with respect to the treaty of El-Arisch, or to whomever censure ought to have been justly charged for thus prolonging a needless and a bloody strife, our government was not

wanting in promptitude in taking steps to remedy these mistakes, and to clear Egypt from the presence of the French. The Turks were stimulated to fresh exertions, and several of their corps put in motion in various points, whilst Sir Ralph Abercromby was appointed to the command of an efficient body of English troops, destined to act, in conjunction with Sir Sidney Smith and our Turkish allies, against Menou, now in the chief command of the republican forces.

After receiving some reinforcements in the Mediterranean, and collecting a very respectable train of artillery at Gibraltar, the British army proceeded to its destination, but certainly not with that celerity which was expected from it, or which the urgency of the occasion seemed to demand. After various harassing and unexpected delays, the armament, in conjunction with Lord Keith, at length proceeded to the coast of Egypt, and arrived off Alexandria on the 1st of March, 1801, and the next day sailed for Aboukir Bay.

Alexandria being then in possession of the French, and there being but two or three spots on the coast accessible to invasion, Aboukir Bay was necessarily chosen for the disembarkment of the British troops, and at a most favourable period, for, at this time, the force of the Mamelukes in

the French pay seems almost to have been subdued, and the Arabs, after the manner of their tribe, trafficked equally with both parties, and waited for the termination of the contest, to side with the victorious party. The French, as we have before stated, dispirited by the flight of Bonaparte and the assassination of General Kleber, had fallen under the command of Menou, a man confessedly inferior to his predecessors in all great and wise qualities, and of so little moral influence with those whom he commanded, that he had not the power to overawe into obedience the various parties into which his army had split themselves.

By a singular oversight, Menou, instead of concentrating all his strength to prevent the landing of the English at Aboukir, divided his forces and sent bodies of them to oppose the Turks, and retained a large corps in garrison at Alexandria. This want of policy was the more absurd, as the Turks did not arrive on the confines of Egypt until the 27th of April, fifty days after the landing of the British.

However, when the English fleet had arrived at Aboukir Bay, they found so high a sea running, and so violent a surf breaking upon the beach, that it was the 8th before any disembarkation could be attempted. On this occasion the inca-

pacity of Menou was strikingly exemplified. He employed these six days of the inactivity forced upon the English, neither by sufficiently fortifying the coast, nor by moving up fresh bodies of men, so that the sixteen thousand troops of the British found only four thousand men opposed to them. However, the French were most advantageously posted, and made a most creditable resistance to the disembarkation. The difficulties with which the English had to contend were neither few nor insignificant. They had to be conveyed, directly under the fire of the enemy's artillery, for a long space in open boats, and, when they neared the beach, to receive the incessant volleys of musketry that played upon them, whilst they were obliged to remain seated in a state of inactivity. The landing, under the superintendence of the Honourable Captain Cochrane, was brilliantly effected, and with a loss much less than was calculated upon, and immediately after, the enemy were driven from their posts, and their defeat made the more humiliating and disastrous by the loss of several pieces of artillery.

Sir Ralph Abercromby was struck with admiration at the admirable coolness and tact evinced by the naval officers and men on this all-important service. He bestowed upon them the high-

est praises, and openly declared that, without their eminent services, he never could have brought his brave troops into action.

It certainly was a most desperate service, and it is the opinion of the highest military authorities, that the event of this invasion would have been extremely doubtful if the whole French army, with their great superiority in cavalry, had been brought down to the coast, before their opponents were clear of the sea, and, even had they effected a landing, before they could have gained time to organise and arrange their order of battle.

The personal services that Sir Sidney Smith performed were, among others, the taking charge of the launches which contained the field artillery. After the debarkation and consequent victory of our troops, Sir Sidney Smith, who had landed and reconnoitred this ground the year before, proposed that the battery at the entrance of Lake Maadie should be maintained when carried, or its assault, at all events, combined with the operations of the landing. Sir Robert Wilson confesses that this would have been a masterly movement, yet it was not adopted.

After the action of the landing, the army employed itself in finding water, as Sir Sidney assured the troops that wherever date trees grew water must be near. This assertion proved true,

and thus Sir Ralph Abercromby found himself relieved from an anxiety which might have determined him to relinquish the expedition. On the 20th of March an Arab chief sent in a letter to Sir Sidney Smith, acquainting him with the arrival of General Menou with a large army, and that it was his intention to surprise and attack the British camp the next morning; but much confidence was not placed in this communication at head-quarters, although Sir Sidney was, in his own mind, convinced of the honesty and truth of the information, and assured his friends that the event would take place.

This little trait shows of what vast importance was the presence of our hero with the army, and how useful were his counsels, for the next day the memorable battle of Alexandria took place. We shall not describe the technical movements of the respective armies, but confine ourselves to the stating of the manner in which the commander-in-chief met with the wound that was fatal to him. On the first alarm of the surprise which Sir Sidney foretold, and who was not believed, Sir Ralph, finding that the right was seriously engaged, proceeded thither. When he came near some ruins near which it was stationed, he despatched his aide-de-camp with some orders to the different brigades, and, whilst thus left alone, some French dragoons penetrated to the spot, and he

was unhorsed: one of them was supposed to be an officer, from the tassel attached to his sword; but just as the edge of the weapon was descending, his natural heroism and the emergency of the moment so much invigorated him, that he seized the sword, and wrested it from the hand of his adversary, who, at the very moment, was bayoneted by a soldier of the 42nd.

Sir Ralph did not perceive that he was wounded when he received the musket-ball in his thigh, but complained greatly of a contusion on his breast, supposed to have been received from the hilt of the sword in the scuffle. Sir Sidney Smith was the first officer who came to Sir Ralph, and who, by an accident, had broken his own sword, which Sir Ralph observing, he instantly presented him with the one which he had so gloriously acquired from the French dragoon. This sword Sir Sidney intends to place upon his monument.

A singular circumstance happened almost immediately afterwards. Major Hall, aide-de-camp to General Cradock, whilst going with orders, had his horse killed. Seeing Sir Sidney, he begged of him permission to remount himself upon the horse of his orderly-man. As Sir Sidney was turning round to the man, he was saved the trouble of giving directions, by a cannon-ball sweeping off the dragoon's head.

"This," exclaimed Sir Sidney, "is destiny! Major Hall, the horse is yours."

Very shortly after, Sir Sidney Smith himself received a violent contusion from a musket-ball, which glanced on his right shoulder.

But to return to the wounded commander-in-chief. As the French cavalry was by this time repulsed, Sir Ralph walked to the redoubt on the right of the Guards, from which he could command a view of the whole field.

At ten o'clock in the morning the action ceased by an orderly and unmolested retreat of the French to the position from which they had emerged, and it was not until their defeat was thus absolutely assured, that Sir Ralph Abercromby, who had remained on the battery, where several times he had been nearly killed by cannon-shot, could be prevailed upon to quit the field.

He had continued walking about, paying no attention to his wound, only occasionally complaining of a pain in his breast from the contusion. Officers who went to him in the course of the action returned, without knowing, from his manner or his appearance, that he was wounded, and many ascertained it only by seeing the blood trickling down his clothes. At last, his spirit, when no longer stimulated by exertion, yielded to exhausted nature; he became faint, was placed in a hammock, and borne to the depôt, cheered

by the feeling expressions and the blessings of the soldiers as he passed. He was then put into a boat, accompanied by his aide-de-camp and esteemed friend, Sir Thomas Dyer, and conveyed to Lord Keith's ship.

On the evening of the 23rd, Sir Sidney Smith went with a flag of truce to the outposts, and demanded to be permitted to communicate with the commandant of Alexandria. An answer having been returned that no person could be permitted to pass the outposts, Sir Sidney sent in his letter, as from Sir Ralph Abercromby and Lord Keith, proposing an evacuation of Egypt by the French, by which they might return to France without being considered as prisoners of war; but that their shipping, artillery, and material must be placed in the hands of the allies. This was angrily refused.

On the 29th, Sir Sidney Smith again went with a flag of truce to the outposts, as on the part of the Capitan Pasha, Sir Ralph Abercromby, and Lord Keith. Admittance into the town was refused, and no answer was returned to the despatch.

It was on the morning of this day that the death of Sir Ralph Abercromby was known. He had borne painful operations with great firmness, but the ball could not be extracted. At

length, mortification ensued, and he died on the evening of the 28th, having always expressed his solicitude for the army, and irritating his body, through his mind, from the first moment of his accident, with a desire to resume his command. He died as should a brave officer—at a good old age, loved and honoured. His fate was a happy one.

On the 31st of this memorable March, eleven Arab chiefs came to Sir Sidney Smith. They were all very intelligent men, with uncommonly fine countenances, and they were well clothed. It was impossible to regard these chiefs without thinking of the wise men of the land, and to see the simplicity of their manners without remembering the patriarchs.

On the 13th of April, we find Sir Sidney, with a party of dragoons, reconnoitring a position, and shortly after proceeding up the Nile with an armed flotilla, so far as El Arisch. This ubiquity seems astonishing. On the 18th, we next meet with him cannonading Rosetta from four dgerms that he had equipped with wonderful despatch.

We now come to the termination of his invaluable services on shore in Egypt. Sir Robert Wilson thus pays an honest tribute to his merits:—

"Sir Sidney was endeared to officers and men

by his conduct, courage, and affability. With pride they beheld the hero of Acre; with admiration they reflected on the convention of El Arisch; they had witnessed his exertions, and calculated on his enterprise. The Arabs regarded him as a superior being. To be the friend of Smith was the highest honour they courted, and his word the only pledge they required. No trouble, no exertions, no expense, had been spared by him to obtain their friendship, and to elevate, in their opinions, the national character. But the order was given, and remonstrance would have been unworthy; it is true, as a seaman he could not complain of being ordered to reassume the command of his ship; but the high power he had been invested with, the ability he had displayed as a soldier and a statesman, entitled him to a superior situation in this expedition, and the interest of the service seemed to require that the connexion he had formed with the Mamelukes should, through him, be maintained. The army, therefore, saw Sir Sidney leave them with regret, but he carried with him their best wishes and gratitude."

It is thus that General Hutchinson mentions Sir Sidney in his despatch:—

"Sir Sidney Smith had originally the command of the seamen who landed from the fleet;

he continued on shore till after the capture of Rosetta, and returned on board the Tigre a short time before the appearance of Admiral Gantheaume's squadron on the coast. He was present at the three actions of the 8th, 13th, and 21st of March, when he displayed that ardour of mind for the service of his country, and that noble intrepidity, for which he has ever been so conspicuous."

CHAPTER XIX.

Cursory sketch of the termination of the Egyptian campaign—Sir Sidney fêted by the Capitan Pasha—Anecdote of another similar honour—Bonaparte's impiety—Sir Sidney returns to England with despatches—Civic honours.

As we have thus far glanced at the military operations of the combined forces in Egypt, it will not be thought superfluous to give a rapid sketch of the proceedings of the allied army, up to the treaty for the evacuation of Egypt.

These proceedings were marked by most singular delays and procrastinations. After the battle of the 21st of March, which was fought about four miles distant from Alexandria, we waited until the 14th of April before we presented ourselves at the gates of Rosetta, which were flung open at our approach. We remained content with this advantage until the 5th of May, when we again commenced military operations

by investing the Fort of St. Julien, garrisoned by only two hundred and sixty men, which we reduced in two days.

On the 5th of May, we commenced our march for Cairo from El Hamed, which was distant only one hundred and twenty miles, yet it occupied us forty-two days in the march. The only opposition that we experienced was at Rhamameth, where we lost twenty men, the French suffering a defeat. This took place on the 9th of May. From this place the French retired from before General Hutchinson, and reached Cairo in three days. However, we moved more deliberately, occupying thirty-eight days to overcome the same distance, without seeing an enemy or firing a shot the whole of the way:

Cairo capitulated on the 20th of June. We then proceeded against Alexandria, at which place Menou had stationed himself with the main body of the French army, and fifty days after the fall of Cairo, during which time not an hostile shot was fired, we opened the siege, and reduced the place in fifteen days.

After this success, so long protracted, Menou consented to the evacuation of Egypt, upon precisely the same terms as those which formed the original evacuation of El Arisch, and the republican army, with its baggage, was conveyed in

ships of the allied powers to the nearest French ports.

As we have before stated, it was only at the commencement of this campaign that Sir Sidney Smith served with the allied army. Is it hazarding too much to say, that if he had continued with it, he would have infused into its commanders some of the same spirit of enterprise that made the defeat of Acre so successful? There is no doubt but that the conquest of Egypt was glorious to our arms, but still we think that we did not reap the full measure of honour in the field that lay before us.

Be this as it may, when the allied army advanced towards Cairo, by a very unworthy compliance with the antipathies of the Capitan Pacha, Sir Sidney was sent on board his ship. The following reason is assigned by Sir Robert Wilson for the aversion of the Capitan towards Sir Sidney.

"Sir Sidney, on receiving Lord Keith's refusal to the convention of El Arisch, instantly sent off an express with it to Cairo, as he knew that General Kleber was immediately to evacuate that city on the faith of the treaty; thus preferring the maintenance of his own and his country's honour to a temporary advantage. The mes-

senger arrived a few days before the evacuation was to have been completed, and the consequences are well known. But certainly, the Turks had so fully depended on its execution, that they had advanced without artillery and ammunition."

We can well conceive this to have been a mortal offence to the Capitan, as he could have but a slight conception of the chivalrous character of Sir Sidney; but, great as was the umbrage taken by the Turks, we should not have suffered the ignominy of permitting our barbarous allies to dictate to us what officers we should or should not employ. Of this we are well assured, that the presence of Sir Sidney Smith with the army was of more importance to its success than that of the Capitan Pacha and all his forces.

Whatever might have been the pique on the one hand by the Turkish commander, and the resentment on the other, we find, shortly after the evacuation of the French, the naval Capitan Pacha giving a grand entertainment on board the Sultan Selim, to Sir William Sidney Smith, to whom, with strong expressions of admiration and attachment, he presented a valuable scimitar, and, what was considered as the greatest compliment that he could confer on him, one of his own

silk flags, a badge of distinction which claims from all Turkish admirals, and other commanders, an equal respect to that which they owe to his highness the Pacha; such as the obligation of personally waiting on him previously to their departure from, and on their rejunction with, the fleet.

Honours of this sort seem to have been lavished on our officer with a prodigality that merit only such as his could have justified. Having, in 1799, rendered himself of much importance to the Grand Seignior, he received the Ottoman order of the Crescent from Constantinople, accompanied with a firman and seal from the Sultan, delegating to him unlimited authority over his subjects in the sea of the Archipelago, and of his Asiatic provinces,—a power which Sir Sidney can exercise at any time by virtue of the seal and document above mentioned. The seal, the turban, and the aigrette, are the same with the Sultan's, with the exception of the inscription which surrounds it, a text from the Koran in Arabic, of which the following is a translation.

Speaking of the Christians, the Koran says, " They are a people which exist. They read of the wonders of God during whole nights, and

they adore Him with bended knees. They believe in God and in the last day. They order the doing of good deeds, they forbid evil ones, and they are eager in works of charity; therefore are they (the Christians) good."

The Pacha, who was, on this occasion, the envoy of the Sultan to Sir Sidney Smith, having formerly incurred Sir Sidney's displeasure, was extremely troubled in his mind with apprehension and fear all the time that he was investing him with the order, and performing the other requisite commands; and, when finally he buckled on the rich sword, he fully expected to see the glittering blade flash in the light, and that, in the next twinkling of his eye, his head would fly off from his shoulders. Had this been the case, it would not have excited the smallest surprise in the by-standers; for it is quite customary in Turkey, and among the Mahometans generally, in sending an embassy to a powerful prince or a pasha, to replace another, or, as in this instance, on a mission of importance, bearing honours and presents from the Sultan, to select an individual who has offended the person whom the Sultan thus deigns to notice with favourable marks of confidence; and immediately after the unfortunate ambassador makes his salaam, he is either re-

lieved of his head by the ready Damascus blade, or, with equal promptitude and facility, strangled by the mutes with the bowstring.

No such fate, however, awaited the pasha sent by the Sultan to Sir Sidney. The commodore certainly enjoyed his embarrassment, and was highly amused at the trepidation and alarm which the old Turk displayed, and which he, in turn, endeavoured to conceal by an appearance of cheerfulness, a vivacity so awkwardly assumed, that even his own followers were quite surprised at his strange gestures and grimaces. The obstinate resistance that the muscles of his face made to represent anything like a genuine smile, and his fruitless attempts to force them to relax, were perfectly frightful, and provoked the laughter of the whole assembly. This mirth was the means of reassuring him a little, for he took it for granted that such a man as Sir Sidney Smith could not look upon the depriving of a poor Turk like himself of his head, to be the most fitting subject in the world for merriment, and, on daring to look up into his face, he was convinced that he had conjectured rightly. Upon a more earnest survey, his astonishment equalled his joy when he found not the slightest indication of resentment, or even of displeasure, in the admiral's countenance, as he turned his eyes

upon him with an expression that he well understood, and began greeting him with words of peace and good-will, thus entirely removing from him any doubts or fears with which he might still be harassed concerning his personal safety. As a still further assurance of Sir Sidney's kindly intention, and because he knew that there were valuable qualities in the man, he made him, a few days afterwards, the governor of Cyprus.

To return to our narrative. After the surrender of the French army, Sir Sidney Smith seized the opportunity of visiting the holy city of Jerusalem, where the following anecdote of Bonaparte was related to him by the superior of a convent. People may place what reliance they choose upon its authenticity, and either conceive it to be of no more value than is generally affixed to a monkish tale, or give it full credence, on the score that, at that time, so strong was the current of infidelity among the French people, that Bonaparte, who wished to float to power on its stream, might well have been guilty of the ascribed impiety.

When his general, Damas, had advanced with a detachment of the army, within a few leagues of Jerusalem, he (Damas) sent to his commander-in-chief for permission to make an attack upon the place. Bonaparte replied, that " when he had

taken Acre, he would come in person, and plant the tree of liberty on the very spot where Christ suffered; and that the first French soldier who fell in the attack should be buried in the holy sepulchre."

At this period, when men's minds are less excited, such fanaticism of infidelity as is here displayed seems altogether incredible. However, whether this anecdote be true or not, as it was uttered to suit the temper of those times, it is a curious record of the exasperation that was entertained, either by the one party or the other. That much of this kind of senseless bravado on the score of religion was promulgated by Bonaparte in his Egyptian career is but too certain, yet this man died a certified good Catholic, and in a faith the most credulous that ever existed.

Sir Sidney Smith was the first Christian who was ever permitted to enter Jerusalem armed, or even in the customary dress of a Frank. By his means, his followers also, and all who visited it through his influence, were allowed the same privilege.

On the 5th of September of the current year, the transactions of which we have been narrating, Sir Sidney Smith and Colonel Abercromby embarked at Alexandria on board the Carmen frigate, with the despatches relative to the late

campaign. Every one will concede that this honourable mission was justly devolved upon the naval commander; and not the less so was it shared by Colonel Abercromby, whose meritorious services had been of the most valuable description, to say nothing of the selection of the herald of the intelligence that was to complete his father's fame being gracefully and properly assigned to a son that was assiduously following in his parent's steps. These two accomplished officers arrived in London on the 10th of November following.

We must presume that Sir Sidney Smith's diplomatic character had now altogether ceased on his accepting this mission with the despatches, even if they had not been supposed to have terminated at the disavowal, on the part of our government, through Lord Keith, of the convention of El Arisch, which we maintain that he so wisely signed. However, we have it upon good authority, that, up to the present time, he was never pecuniarily remunerated for his ambassadorial functions.

Sir Sidney, some very considerable time after, finding himself at Vienna, when the late Marquis of Londonderry, then Lord Castlereagh, was settling the affairs of the European world, stated to his lordship the disagreeable position in which

he found himself, and dwelt forcibly upon the injustice of letting claims for services so valuable as those which he had performed in Egypt remain so long unsettled. Lord Castlereagh immediately assented to the hardship of the case, and proceeded directly to make use of the best remedy, by amply satisfying the demand. "But," as Sir Sidney expressed it himself, "as he thought proper to terminate his existence shortly afterwards, and neglected to leave an official memorandum of the transaction, I was obliged to refund the money, and up to the present moment, although I have been perpetually promised by the different ministers that I should be indemnified and settled with, I have never received one farthing."

Upon Sir Sidney Smith's return to England, one of the first honours with which he was greeted, and at which we have before hinted, was displayed in the following manner.

The Corporation of London, anxious to exhibit a proof of their admiration of the gallant achievements of Sir Sidney Smith at the siege of Acre, resolved to bestow upon him the freedom of their ancient city, and to accompany it with the present of a valuable sword; on the 7th instant, the naval hero attended at Guildhall, in order to be invested with the civic privileges of

which he had been deemed worthy, and to receive the symbol of valour he had so justly merited.

The Lord Mayor, the Chamberlain, and several of the Aldermen were ready to receive him. He made his appearance between one and two, and was ushered into the Chamberlain's office. The Lord Mayor received him with the utmost courtesy, and introduced him to Mr. James Dixon, the gentleman who had done himself the honour of voting the thanks of the court of common council in his favour. The Chamberlain then addressed the distinguished officer in the following terms:—

"Sir Sidney Smith—I give you joy, in the name of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons of the City of London, in common council assembled, and present you the thanks of the Court for your gallant and successful defence of St. Jean d'Acre against the desperate attack of the French army under the command of General Bonaparte. And, as a further testimony of the sense the Court entertains of your great display of valour on that occasion, I have the honour to present you with the freedom of the city and this sword. [Sir Sidney received the sword, and pressed it with fervour to his lips.] I will not, sir, attempt a panegyric

upon an action to which the first oratorical powers in the most eloquent assemblies have been confessed unequal; but I cannot help exulting on this happy occasion at the vast acquisition of national reputation acquired by your conduct at the head of a handful of Britons, in repulsing him who has been justly styled the Alexander of the day, surrounded by a host of conquerors till then deemed invincible. By this splendid achievement you frustrated the designs of the foe on our East Indian territories, prevented the overthrow of the Ottoman power in Asia, the downfall of its throne in Europe, and prepared the way for that treaty of peace, which it is devoutly to be wished may long preserve the tranquillity of the universe, and promote friendship and goodwill among all nations. It must be highly gratifying to every lover of his country that this event should happen on the very spot where a gallant English monarch formerly displayed such prodigies of valour—that a celebrated historian, recording his actions, struck with the stupendous instances of prowess displayed by that heroic prince, suddenly exclaimed, 'Am I writing history or romance?' Had, sir, that historian survived to have witnessed what has recently happened at St. Jean d'Acre, he would have exultingly resigned his doubts, and

generously have confessed that actions, no less extraordinary than those performed by the gallant Cœur de Lion, have been achieved by Sir Sidney Smith." . This speech was followed by universal acclamations.

Sir Sidney Smith thus replied:—

"Sir—Unconscious that I should have been thought worthy of being addressed by you on the part of the city of London in terms of such high and unqualified approbation, I am but ill prepared for replying in a manner adequately to express the sentiments with which I am impressed. My confidence would be lessened, did I not feel that I was surrounded by friends who are dear to me, and whose approbation I am proud to have received. It shall be the object of my future life to merit the panegyric you have been pleased to pronounce in my favour. For the freedom of your city, with which you have honoured me, I return you my sincere thanks, and shall implicitly conform to all the obligations annexed to it. Above all, I accept this sword as the most honourable reward which could have been conferred on me. In peace it will be my proudest ornament, and in war I trust I shall be ever ready to draw it in defence of my country, and for the protection of the city of London."—[Loud applause.]

Sir Sidney Smith then took the usual civic oaths; and having made a liberal donation to the poor's box, departed amidst the acclamations of the populace.

CHAPTER XX.

Sir Sidney Smith returned member of parliament for Rochester—His speech in the House of Commons, and at the anniversary of the Naval Institution—His appointment in the Antelope to the command of a squadron—His services in that command.

THE grateful countrymen of Sir Sidney Smith, eager to testify their feelings for his almost universal talents, showed him, on every occasion, the most marked respect. Civic honours followed those of the battle, the ocean, and the court. At the general election of representatives for the second parliament of the United Kingdom, the citizens of Rochester evinced their good taste by choosing our officer, in conjunction with Mr. James Hulkes, to watch their own interests and those of the empire in the House of Commons. Sir Sidney accordingly took his seat for that ancient city on the opening of the session, on the 16th of November, 1802.

At this period, the country was in a state of

fitful repose, during a short and hollow peace; a peace that seemed to be more like a mutual cessation of hostilities, only obtained in order to afford all parties a little respite to enable them to recommence war with increased bitterness, fury, and devastation.

In his Majesty's address to his parliament, whilst he assured both Houses that he was, with a paternal anxiety, most solicitous to maintain peace, he spoke as apprehensive of approaching war, and breathed forth the accents of defiance and preparation. In the Upper House, Lord Nelson, fresh in the glories of the victory of the Nile, seconded the address to the throne. This was commendable to all parties, and honourable to the ministry.

At this distance of time it is impossible accurately to know, or if known, fully to appreciate, the various actuating motives of those who then ruled the destinies of England. But, looking to the services of Sir Sidney, and weighing how greatly his talents and activity had been the cause of gaining for England the peace, such as it was, we presume to think that he should have done that in the House of Commons, which Lord Nelson so gracefully performed in the House of Lords.

For the short time that he was enabled to

attend to his parliamentary duties, the commodore was, though by no means obtrusive, diligent and attentive. At that period Pitt, Fox, and Sheridan, with other men who have identified themselves with the history of the country, were in the zenith of their glory. In the fields of oratory, competition with declaimers like these would have been vain. Besides, at that time, Sir Sidney conscientiously supported the party that was opposed to the latitudinarian principles of government, religion, and morals, that was then so lamentably gaining ground. The posts that a man of virtuous ambition would have been anxious to fill, were all occupied. Nothing was left for Sir Sidney, but to follow those who were so well able to lead; and to support by his vote, and strengthen by his countenance, those principles for which he had so gloriously fought, bled, and conquered.

Yet, though by no means a clamorous or even a garrulous member, when the opportunity occurred, by which the House might benefit by his nautical or military experience, he knew well how to impart that experience in a manner both dignified and impressive. On the debate on the navy estimates, when Mr. Alexander moved for a grant of fifty thousand seamen for the service of the ensuing year, Sir Sidney Smith expressed

considerable regret at the great reductions which were so suddenly made, not only in the king's dockyards, but also throughout the naval service. He remarked, feelingly, that by this proceeding a prodigious number of men had thus been reduced to the utmost poverty and distress; and thus, being goaded by a sudden and undeserved misery, they would be compelled to seek for employment in foreign states, and the very sinews of our strength and safety be wasted. He knew that, however distasteful foreign service might be to the English sailor, dire necessity would oblige him to enter into it. Though he supported the vote, yet, on the grounds that he had stated, he earnestly wished that the number of seamen to be employed were considerably greater than it actually was; for he knew, from his own experience, that what was called an ordinary seaman could hardly find employment, at present, either in his Majesty's or the merchant service. He then proceeded to inform the House that he himself had been present at some of the changes which had lately taken place in France, and that they resembled more the changes of scenery at a theatre than anything else. In that versatile country everything was done for stage effect; and, whether it were the death of Cæsar, the fall of Byzantium,

or the march of Alexander, it seemed, to a Frenchman, almost indifferent. He looked only to the blaze of the moment, and the magic of effect. Knowing this trait in the Gallic character, he felt assured, that if the invasion of Britain were to be produced for the amusement and excitement of that nation, it would have the stage effect sufficient to draw four hundred thousand volunteers to join in the procession. Under these circumstances, he wished that this country should always be in a situation to call together speedily a strong naval force—a force equal to frustrate any attempts on the part of the enemy.

The salutary nature of this advice events were not slow in making apparent, for, in a few weeks subsequent to the delivery of this concise and sensible speech, our subject was in the command of a portion of the naval armament, the increase of which he had so wisely and powerfully advocated.

In all those acts that had philanthropy for their end, or which could tend to ameliorate human suffering, Sir Sidney Smith was always found in the foremost ranks of the beneficent. On the 2d of June in the year 1802, the anniversary of the Naval Institution was held at the London Tavern. On this occasion Lord Belgrave was the chairman, occupying that dis-

tinguished post in the room of Earl St. Vincent, who was compelled to be absent on account of ill health. There were present some of the most distinguished heroes of the country, hardly one of whom now lives, saving in the memories of their grateful countrymen, with the exception of Sir Sidney Smith. Sir Hyde Parker, Lord Nelson, Sir William Hamilton, with very many others, to whom the nation then looked up with confidence, graced this benevolent meeting. We have no space, nor is it our province to record, any of those proceedings, excepting those personally connected with our officer.

Upon the health of Sir Sidney Smith being drunk with the warmest and most enthusiastic applause, he thus addressed the meeting:—

" He need not assure the company of his warm feelings towards them for that Asylum they had provided for the orphans of those brave men who had fallen in the late contest. Unfortunately for him, too many were in the list of his dearest friends."—[Here Sir Sidney's feelings were too great for utterance—his head sank—the big tear rolled down the hero's cheek.*]—A solemn silence prevailed for several minutes, and soft sympathy filled many a manly bosom, until Sir Sidney was roused by the thunder of ap-

* This is an extract from the Naval Chronicle.

plause which followed. He again addressed the company, stated that it was his intention to hand the governors a list of those sufferers; among them was his intimate friend Captain Miller, of the Theseus; they had served together as midshipmen under Lord Rodney. Captain Miller lost his life off Acre, and had left two children. The next was Major Oldfield, of the marines. He would tell the company where the dead body of this brave man was contended for, and they would judge where and how he died. It was in the sortie of the garrison of St. Jean d'Acre, when attacked by General Bonaparte, that Major Oldfield, who commanded the sortie, was missing. On our troops advancing, his body was found at the mouth of one of the enemy's mines, and at the foot of their works. Our brave men hooked him by the neckcloth, as he lay dead, to draw him off; the enemy at the same time pierced him in the side with a halberd, and each party struggled for the body; the neckcloth gave way, and the enemy succeeded in dragging to their works this brave man; and here he must do them that justice which such gallant enemies are fully entitled to; they next day buried Major Oldfield with all the honours of war. This brave man has left children. In the list also is Captain Canes, late first lieutenant of the Tigre.

He lost not his life in any of the *numerous actions* in which he was engaged, but in carrying despatches to the Mediterranean of the preliminaries of peace. He perished at sea with his ship and crew. This brave officer has left young orphans who want support." Sir Sidney concluded a most affecting address thus:—" That their orphans, and the offspring of the many others who have so nobly fought and died in their king and country's service, may meet support equal to their claim, is the warmest wish of my heart."

On the 7th of January 1803, Sir Sidney obtained from his sovereign permission to bear the following honourable augmentations to the armorial ensigns borne by his family, viz. on the cheveron a wreath of laurel, accompanied by two crosses Calvary; and, on the chief augmentation, the interior of an ancient fortification in perspective; in the angle a breach, and on the sides of the said breach the standard of the Ottoman Empire and the union flag of Great Britain. For crest, the imperial Ottoman chelengk, or plume of triumph, upon a turban, in allusion to the honourable and distinguished decoration transmitted by the Turkish Emperor to Sir William Sidney Smith, in testimony of his esteem, and in acknowledgment of his meritorious exertions in defence of Acre; and the

family crest, viz. a leopard's head, collared and lined, issuing out of an oriental crown, the same arms and crest to be borne by Sir William Sidney Smith and his issue, together with the motto "CŒUR DE LION." And although the privilege of bearing supporters be limited to peers of the realm, the knights of the different orders, and the proxies of princes of the blood-royal at installations, except in such cases wherein, under particular circumstances, the king shall be pleased to grant his especial license for the use thereof; his Majesty, in order to give a further testimony of his particular approbation of Sir Sidney Smith's services, was also graciously pleased to allow him to bear, for supporters to his arms, a tiger gardant navally crowned, in the mouth a palm branch, being the symbol of victory supporting the union flag of Great Britain, with the inscription "JERUSALEM, 1799," upon the cross of St. George, and a lamb murally crowned, being the symbol of peace, supporting the banner of Jerusalem.

Honoured thus by his king, and thus prized by his country, shortly after his Majesty's declaration against France, dated at Westminster, May the 18th, Sir Sidney hoisted his broad pennant as commodore on board of the Antelope, of fifty guns, with the command of a squadron to be

employed on the French coast. His appointment to this ship bears the date of the 12th of March, 1803.

Of the fatigue, the irksomeness, and the danger of this service, a landsman can form no adequate opinion. The very seas in which the vessel is forced to remain, sailing hither and thither, within a very circumscribed compass, are replete with dangers. The pilot and the master have no longer to contend with the open sea, of which the dangers are, comparatively speaking, frank though great. But in the waters that wash the French, Flemish, and English shores, the soundings are variable, the sandbanks multitudinous, and continually shifting their positions. When we add to all these the impetuosity of the tides as they rush through the narrow races, and whirl round the low headlands, it will be most apparent that the shot and shell of the enemy are to be reckoned among the least of the dangers to which a ship is exposed in the service on which the Antelope was employed when under the command of Sir Sidney Smith.

The vessel was always either lying off the Texel, Ostend, or the coast of France opposite to England, sometimes at sea, sometimes at single anchor, excepting on those occasions when

she was obliged to repair to Yarmouth Roads for the necessary refits.

When on the enemy's coasts, scarcely a day passed but some skirmish ensued, now with the ship, then with the boats. The prizes made were numerous, but singly of too little importance to call for observation. Sometimes these harassing services were performed by the crew of the Antelope alone, sometimes assisted by other vessels.

Very much of this fatiguing service consisted of taking soundings in the mouths of the harbours, and under the guns of the batteries. The danger and the damage encountered in these useful but little valued services, so far as either emolument or fame is concerned, are of an extent as little understood as it is appreciated. Arms and legs may be shredded off, and yet no room afforded even for five lines of glory to the sufferers in a despatch published in the Gazette. We acknowledge that the pension will be paid, but the man may be disabled for life, and all his hopes of future advancement in his profession destroyed. We have been induced to make these remarks, in order to impress upon the general reader that naval officers may have deserved well of the country, though they could never boast

of having contributed to the success of a general action, or to the glory of some well-contested single encounter.

Our officer soon made his presence felt by the enemy, for by his vigilance he kept them in a state of continual alarm. At this time, the French were employing all their skill and activity in preparing, in the various seaports contiguous to Great Britain, a vast armament for the invasion of those shores that have never seen a successful enemy upon them since the Norman conquest. Nothing now was spoken of on one side of the Channel but praams, flat-bottomed boats, and flotillas; and, on the other, sea fencibles, corps of loyal volunteers, and catamarans.

The service on which our commodore was now employed gave but little scope to his ambition, and he performed nothing brilliant, solely because the enemy would give him no opportunity. But his untiring watchfulness, though it brought him no increase of glory, insured the safety of his country, and security to the commerce of England in the Channel.

But he was not wholly confined to the duties of vigilance, for on the 17th of May, 1804, he made an attack on a French flotilla lying at anchor off Ostend. This was a bold, well-

planned, but unsuccessful attempt to prevent the junction of the enemy's flotilla at Flushing with that of Ostend. The failure principally arose from the want of a sufficient number of gun-boats, which, from the shallowness of water in which these vessels move, could alone act against the enemy with effect. Fifty-nine sail of the Flushing division reached Ostend in safety; and the English force, on the falling of the tide, were compelled to haul off into deep water, after being nearly the whole day engaged, and with considerable loss.

We shall give the narrative of this little affair in his own words, in a despatch addressed to Lord Keith.

"My Lord,—Information from all quarters, and the evident state of readiness in which the enemy's armaments were in Helvoet, Flushing, and Ostend, indicating the probability of a general movement from those ports, I reinforced Captain Manby, off Helvoet, with one ship, and directed Captain Hancock, of the Cruiser, stationed in-shore, to combine his operations and the Rattler's with the squadron of gunboats stationed off Ostend. The Antelope, Penelope, and Amiable, occupied a central position in sight both of Flushing and Ostend, in anxious expectation of the enemy's appearance. Yesterday,

at half-past five A.M., I received information from Captain Hancock, then off Ostend, that the enemy's flotilla was hauling out of that pier, and had already twenty-one one-masted vessels, and one schooner outside in the roads; and at half past seven the same morning I had the satisfaction to see the Flushing flotilla, of fifty-nine sail, viz. two ship-rigged praams, nineteen schooners, and thirty-eight schuyts, steering along-shore from that port towards Ostend, under circumstances which allowed me to hope I should be able to bring them to action. The signal was made in the Cruiser and Rattler for an enemy in the E.S.E. to call their attention from Ostend; the squadron weighed the moment the flood made, and allowed of the heavier ships following them over the banks; the signals to chase and engage were obeyed with alacrity, spirit, and judgment by the active and experienced officers your lordship has done me the honour to place under my orders. Captains Hancock and Mason attacked this formidable line with the greatest gallantry and address, attaching themselves particularly to the two praams, both of them of greater force than themselves, independent of the cross fire from the schooners and schuyts. I sent the Amiable by signal to support them. The Penelope (having an able pilot, Mr. Thornton)

on signal being made to engage, Captain Broughton worked up to the centre of the enemy's line, as near as the shoal water would allow, while the Antelope went round the Stroom Sand, to cut the van off from Ostend. Unfortunately our gunboats were not in sight, having, as I undersood since, devoted their attention to preventing the Ostend division from moving westward. The enemy attempted to get back to Flushing; but being harassed by the Cruiser and the Rattler, and the wind coming more easterly against them, they were obliged to run the gauntlet to the westward, keeping close to the beach under the protection of the batteries. Having found a passage for the Antelope within the Stroom Sand, she was enabled to bring her broadside to bear on the headmost schooners before they got the length of Ostend. The leader struck immediately, and the crew deserted her: she was, however, recovered by the followers. The artillery from the town and camp, and the rowing gunboats from the pier, kept up a constant and well-directed fire for their support; our shot, however, which went over the schooners, going ashore among the horse artillery, interrupted it in a degree; still, however, it was from the shore we received the greatest annoyance; for the schooners and schuyts crowding along could not bring

their prow guns to bear without altering their course towards us, which they could not venture; and their side guns, though numerous and well served, were very light. In this manner the Penelope and Antelope engaged every part of their long line, from four to eight, while the Amiable, Cruiser, and Rattler continued to press their rear. Since two o'clock the sternmost praam struck her colours and ran on shore; but the artillery-men from the army got on board, and she renewed her fire on the Amiable with the precision of a land battery, from which that ship suffered much. Captain Bolton speaks much in praise of Lieutenant Mather, who is wounded. Several of the schooners and schuyts immediately under the fire of the ships were driven on shore in the like manner, and recovered by the army. At eight, the tide falling and leaving us in little more water than we could draw, we were reluctantly obliged to haul off into deeper water to keep afloat, and the enemy's vessels that were not on shore, or too much shattered, were thus able to reach Ostend,—these and the Ostend division having hauled into the basin. I have anchored in such a position as to keep an eye on them; and I shall endeavour to close with them again, if they move into deeper water. I have to regret that, from the depth of water in which

these vessels move, gunboats only can act against them with effect: four have joined me, and I have sent them in to see what they can do with the praam that is on shore. I have great satisfaction in bearing testimony to your lordship, of the gallant and steady conduct of the captains, commanders, officers, seamen, and marines under my orders. Captains Hancock and Mason bore the brunt of the attack, and continued it for six hours against a great superiority of fire, particularly from the army on shore, the howitzer shells annoying them much. These officers deserve the highest praise I can give them. They speak of the conduct of their lieutenants, officers, and crews, in terms of warm panegyric. Messrs. Budd and Dalyell, from the Antelope, acted in the absence of two lieutenants of those ships. Lieutenants Garrety and Patful, commanding the Favourite and Stag cutters, did their best with their small guns against greater numbers of greater calibre. Lieutenant Hillier, of the Antelope, gave me all the assistance and support on her quarter-deck his ill state of health would permit. Lieutenant Stokes and Mr. Slesser, acting lieutenants, directed the fire on the lower and main decks with coolness and precision. It would be the highest injustice if I omitted to mention the intrepid conduct of Mr. Lewis, the master, Mr.

Nunn and Mr. Webb, pilots, to whose steadiness, skill, and attention, particularly the former, I shall ever feel myself indebted for having brought the Antelope into action within the sands, where certainly the enemy could not expect to be met by a ship of her size; and for having allowed her to continue engaged with Commodore Verheuil, to the last minute it was possible to remain in such shoal water, with a falling tide. It is but justice to say, the enemy's commodore pursued a steady course, notwithstanding our fire, and returned it with spirit to the last. I could not detach open boats in the enemy's line, to pick up those vessels which had struck and were deserted, mixed as they were with those still firing. Captain Hancock sent me one schuyt that had hauled out of the line and surrendered. She had a lieutenant and twenty-three soldiers of the forty-eighth regiment, with five Dutch seamen, on board. She is so useful here, I cannot part with her yet. Enclosed is a list of our loss, which, though great, is less than might have been expected, owing to the enemy's directing their fire at our masts. The Rattler and Cruiser have, of course, suffered most in the latter respect, but are nearly ready for service again. The smoke would not allow us to see the effect of our shot on the enemy; but their loss, considering the number of them

under our guns for so long, must be great in proportion. We see the mastheads above water of three of the schooners and one of the schuyts which were sunk.

"W. SIDNEY SMITH.

"*Lord Keith, K. B. &c. &c. &c.*"

In this little skirmish, Sir Sidney's squadron sustained a loss of two petty officers, ten seamen, and one boy killed; and two officers, four petty officers, twenty-five seamen, and one marine wounded.

This despatch will give the reader a tolerably accurate idea of the nature of the warfare that we were then compelled to carry on. It was of a most harassing nature, attended with great privation and suffering, and involving a loss of limb and life, that seems no way commensurate to the combatants, either in fame or in advantage, even when the operations were the most successful.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Court of Naples violates its treaty of neutrality with the French—Naples overrun by them—Sir Sidney Smith proceeds to annoy them—Relieves Gaeta—Takes Capri—His despatch.

At this momentous period, war was raging in almost every quarter of the civilised world; and after Sir Sidney's term of command in the Antelope had expired, his services were of a nature far too valuable to permit them to remain, longer than the rules of the navy permitted, uncalled for. But his past conduct merited much more distinction, and far greater rewards, than it had yet received, though, about the beginning of the year 1804, he was promoted to the highly honourable and somewhat lucrative appointment of a Colonel of Royal Marines, and, on the 9th of November 1805, was advanced to the rank of Rear-Admiral of the Blue.

During this interval, as he was not employed afloat, we do not find his name mentioned in the public records. He was assiduously and successfully cultivating the arts of peace, and laying the foundation for that scientific proficiency, for which he afterwards became, in many branches of useful knowledge, so conspicuous.

The progress of Bonaparte towards universal European dominion had now become most alarming. He had nearly overrun the continent, and had really hardly anything to do but to look around him for fresh pretences for aggression, and such a pretence the imprudence of the Neapolitan government readily afforded him.

By a treaty ratified by the King of Naples on the 8th of October of the year 1805, the French troops agreed to withdraw from the occupation of the Neapolitan territory; and the king engaged, in return, to remain neutral in the war between France and the allies, and to repel by force every encroachment on his neutrality. He more particularly became bound not to permit the troops of any other great power to enter his territories, or to confide the command of his armies or strong places to any Russian or Austrian officers, or to any French emigrant, and not to permit any belligerent squadron to enter into his ports.

Hardly had six weeks elapsed when every one

of the stipulations of the treaty had been violated. On the 20th of November, an English and Russian fleet appeared in the Bay of Naples, and landed a body of forces in that city and the vicinity. The French ambassador immediately took down the arms of France from over the gate of his hotel, and demanded his passport.

The Russians, who were in number about fourteen thousand men, under General Lacey, landed at Naples, and the English, amounting to about ten thousand, under Sir James Craig and Sir John Stuart, landed at Castell-a-Mare. The Neapolitans now openly abetted these operations.

But it was not long before the Court of Naples was made sensible of the full extent of its imprudence. On the morning after the signature of the peace of Presburg, Bonaparte issued a proclamation from his head-quarters at Vienna, declaring that "the Neapolitan dynasty had ceased to reign," and denouncing vengeance against the family, in terms that left no hope for accommodation or pardon.

From reasons only to be discovered in the arcana of those who conducted the political operations of England, immediately after this denunciation of vengeance, the principal cause of it, the Russian and English troops, withdrew from Naples, and left the King and his advisers in

dismay, to repent of their folly as they best could. The immediate consequence of all this was, that the King of Naples, with his court, was forced to fly a second time to Palermo, whilst Joseph Bonaparte was crowned, in his stead, at Naples, and all the constituted authorities took the oath of fidelity to him. No sovereign was, perhaps, more easily manœuvred out of his kingdom than was this unfortunate King of Naples.

The assumption of the royal dignity in Naples by Joseph Bonaparte, and the defection of so many persons of distinction, excited the liveliest indignation at the court of Palermo. Though driven from Naples by their inability to resist the French arms, they were eager to attempt the recovery of that kingdom, and thus they continued to excite the Neapolitans to rebellion against their *de facto* sovereign.

These attempts only produced defeat and slaughter; and though Abruzzo and Calabria were delivered, for a short time, from the French yoke, the French prevailed in the end; and after a fruitless waste of blood, and the perpetration of atrocities by both parties, disgraceful to humanity, those provinces were again compelled to acknowledge Joseph Bonaparte as their sovereign.

Notwithstanding these disasters, a fresh insurrection was decided upon; but so great was the uni-

versal dread of the French arms, that the court would not have attained its ends, had not an English army landed on the coast of Calabria, and begun its military operations by a most splendid and glorious victory.

It was to forward these operations on an extensive scale that induced our government to select some enterprising officer. The choice naturally fell upon Sir Sidney Smith. About the middle of April he had arrived at Palermo in the Pompée of eighty-four guns, and had taken the command of the English squadron destined, among other things, for the defence of Sicily, consisting of five ships of the line, besides frigates, transports, and gunboats.

With this force at his disposal, the gallant rear-admiral proceeded to the coast of Italy, and began his operations by introducing into Gaeta supplies of stores and ammunition, for the want of which its garrison had been greatly straitened. This operation produced the very best effects, as, through it, the enemy, though the besiegers, were immediately compelled to act on the defensive.

Having performed this important service, and left at Gaeta a flotilla of gunboats, under the protection of a frigate to assist at the defence of the place, he proceeded to the Bay of Naples,

spreading consternation and alarm all along the coast, and so much intimidated the French, that they, in much haste, conveyed the greater part of their battering train from Gaeta to Naples, in order to protect the capital from insult, and secure it, if possible, from attack.

By these operations, the rear-admiral thus virtually raised the siege of Gaeta, as all the battering trains were removed from the trenches, and the attack was totally suspended.

It happened that, at the very moment when he approached Naples, the city was splendidly illuminated, on account of Joseph Bonaparte being proclaimed King of the Two Sicilies. Indeed, with a fickleness that is much the character of the unthinking multitude, there was every demonstration of joy evinced on the part of the populace, in which the nobility and gentry seemed to do more than share. The nobles were most eager to show their attachment to their new king, by soliciting from him all manner of offices and distinctions, at the same time most zealously proffering their services.

It was completely in the power of the English admiral to have disturbed these demonstrations of festivity, and to turn the place of rejoicing into a scene of mourning and desolation; but, as the sufferers from his hostilities must have been the

inhabitants of Naples, and not the French troops or the new king, he wisely and humanely forbore to pour upon the city the devastations of war. He considered that the unfortunate inhabitants had evil enough already upon them, and that the restoration of his capital to the lawful sovereign and its fugitive denizens, would be but of little gratification, if it should be found a heap of ruins; and, lastly, that as he had no force to land and preserve order, in the event of the French retiring to the fortresses, he should leave an opulent city a prey to the licentious part of the community, who would not fail to profit by the confusion that the flames might occasion.

From the Bay of Naples, the rear-admiral proceeded with all despatch to the Island of Capri, determined to wrest that place from the enemy, which, by its position so effectually preserving their southern communications, were of a paramount object to the French to possess.

The commandant was accordingly summoned to surrender, and on his refusal, an attack commenced, in which he was slain. The army then beat a parley, a capitulation was subsequently signed, and the garrison marched out with all the honours of war.

The following is Sir Sidney Smith's despatch.

"*Letter from Sir Sidney Smith, dated Pompée, at anchor off Scalia, May* 24, *containing an Account of Proceedings in Calabria.*

My Lord,—I arrived at Palermo in the Pompée on the 21st of last month, and took on me the command of the squadron your lordship has done me the honour to place under my orders. I found things in the state that may be well imagined, on the government being displaced from its capital, with the loss of one of the two kingdoms, and the dispersion of the army assembled in Calabria. The judicious arrangement made by Captain Sotheron, of the ships under his orders, and the position of the British army under Sir J. Stuart at Messina, had, however, prevented farther mischief. I had the satisfaction of learning that Gaeta still held out, although, as yet, without succour, from a mistaken idea, much too prevalent, that the progress of the French armies is irresistible. It was my first care to see that the necessary supplies should be safely conveyed to the governor. I had the inexpressible satisfaction of conveying the most essential articles to Gaeta, and of communicating to his Serene highness the governor (on the breach-battery, which he never quits) the assurance of farther support to any extent within

my power, for the maintenance of that important fortress, hitherto so long preserved by his intrepidity and example. Things wore a new aspect on the arrival of the ammunition: the redoubted fire of the enemy, with red-hot shot into the Mole, (being answered with redoubled vigour,) did not prevent the landing of everything we had brought, together with four of the Excellent's lower-deck guns, to answer this galling fire, which bore directly on the landing-place. A second convoy, with the Intrepid, placed the garrison beyond the immediate want of anything essential; and the enemy, from advancing his nearest approaches within two hundred and fifty yards, was reduced to the defensive, in a degree dreading one of those sorties which the Prince of Hesse had already shown him his garrison was equal to, and which was become a much safer operation, now that the flanking fire of eight Neapolitan gunboats I had brought with me, in addition to four his highness had already used successfully, would cover it, even to the rear of the enemy's trenches. Arrangements were put in a train for this purpose; and, according to a wise suggestion of his Serene highness, measures were taken for the embarkation of a small party from the garrison to land in the rear of the enemy's batteries to the northward. I confided the execution of the naval part of this arrange-

ment to Captain Richardson, of H. M. S. Juno, putting the Neapolitan frigate and gunboats under his orders. His Serene Highness, possessing the experience of European warfare, and a most firm mind, having no occasion for farther aid on the spot, I felt I could quit the garrison without apprehension for its safety in such hands, with the present means of defence, and that I could best co-operate with him by drawing some of the attacking force off for the defence of Naples. I accordingly proceeded thither with the line of battle ships named in the margin.* The enemy's apprehension of attack occasioned them to convey some of the battering train from the trenches before Gaeta to Naples. The city was illuminated on account of Joseph Bonaparte proclaiming himself King of the Two Sicilies! The junction of the Eagle made us five sail of the line, and it would have been easy for their fire to have interrupted this ceremony and show of festivity: but I considered that the unfortunate inhabitants had evil enough on them; that the restoration of the capital to its lawful sovereign and fugitive inhabitants would be no gratification, if it should be found a heap of ruins, ashes, and bones; and that as I had no force to land and keep order, in case of the French army retiring to the fortresses,

* Pompée, Excellent, Athenienne, Intrepid.

I should leave an opulent city a prey to the licentious part of the community, who would not fail to profit by the confusion the flames would occasion: not a gun was fired.

"But no such consideration operated on my mind to prevent me dislodging the French garrison from the Island of Capri, which, from its situation, protecting the coasting communication southward, was a great object for the enemy to keep, and by so much, one for me to wrest from him. I accordingly summoned the French commandant to surrender: on his non-acquiescence, I directed Captain Rowley, in H. M. S. Eagle, to cover the landing of marines and boats' crews, and caused an attack to be made under his orders. That brave officer placed his ship judiciously; nor did he open his fire till she was secured, and his distance marked by the effect of musketry on his quarter-deck, where the first lieutenant, J. Crawley, fell wounded, and a seaman was killed. Although Captain Rowley regretted much the services of that meritorious officer in such a critical moment, he has since recovered. An hour's fire from both decks of the Eagle, (between nine and ten o'clock,) with that of two Neapolitan mortar-boats under an active officer, Lieutenant Rivers, drove the enemy from the vineyards within their walls; the marines were landed, and

gallantly led by Captain Bunce; the seamen in like manner, under Lieutenant Morrell of the Eagle, and Lieutenant Redding of the Pompée, mounted the steps: for such was their road, headed by the officers, nearest to the narrow pass by which alone they could ascend. Lieutenant Carrol had thus an opportunity of particularly distinguishing himself. Captain Stannus, commanding the Athenienne's marines, gallantly pressing forward, gained the heights, and the French commandant fell by his hand. This event being known, the enemy beat a parley, a letter from the second in command claimed the terms offered, but being dated on the 12th, after midnight, some difficulty occurred, my limitation as to time being precise; but on the assurance that the drum beat before twelve, the capitulation annexed was signed, and the garrison allowed to march out and pass over to Naples with every honour of war, after the interment of their former brave commander with due respect. We thus became masters of this important post. The enemy not having been allowed time to bring two pieces of heavy cannon, with their ammunition, to Capri, the boat containing them, together with a boat loaded with timber for the construction of gun-boats at Castilamare, took refuge at Massa, on the main land, opposite to the island, where the

guard had hauled the whole upon the beach. I detached the two mortar-boats and a Gaeta privateer, under the orders of Lieutenants Faliverne and Rivera, to bring them off, sending only Mr. Williams, midshipman of the Pompée, from the squadron, on purpose to let the Neapolitans have the credit of the action which they fairly obtained; for, after dislodging the enemy from a strong tower, they not only brought off the boats and two thirty-five pounders, but the powder also (twenty barrels) from the magazine of the tower, before the enemy assembled in force. The projected sorties took place on the 13th and 15th in the morning, in a manner to reflect the highest credit on the part of the garrison and naval force employed. The covering fire from the fleet was judiciously directed by Captains Richardson and Vicuna, whose conduct on this whole service merits my warmest approbation. I enclose Captain Richardson's two letters, as best detailing these affairs, and a list of the killed and wounded on the 12th.

"On the 19th ult., the boats of the Pompée, under Lieutenant Beaucroft, brought out a merchant vessel from Scalvitra, near Salerno, although protected by a heavy fire of musketry. That officer and Mr. Sterling distinguished themselves much. The enemy are endeavouring to

establish a land-carriage there to Naples. On the 23rd, obtaining intelligence that the enemy had two thirty-six pounders in a small vessel on the beach at Sealia, I sent the Pompée's boats in for them; but the French troops were too well posted in the houses of the town for them to succeed without the cover of the ship. I accordingly stood in with the Pompée; sent a messenger to the inhabitants to withdraw; which being done, a few of the Pompée's lower-deck guns cleared the town and neighbouring hills, while the launch, commanded by Lieutenant Mouraylian, and Lieutenant Oates of the marines, and Mr. Williams, drove the French, with their armed adherents, from the guns, and took possession of the castle, and of them. Finding, on my landing, that the town was tenable against any force the enemy could bring against me from the nearest garrison in a given time, I took post with the marines; and, under cover of their position, by the extreme exertions of Lieutenant Carrol, Mr. Ives, master, and the petty officers and boats' crew, the guns were conveyed to the Pompée, with twenty-two barrels of powder.

(Signed) "W. SIDNEY SMITH."

After placing an English garrison in Capri, Sir Sidney proceeded southward along the coast, giv-

ing the greatest annoyance everywhere to the enemy, obstructing by land, and intercepting by sea entirely, their communications along the shore, so as to retard their operations against Gaeta, which was the chief purpose of undertaking the expedition.

Encouraged by this success of our arms, several sorties took place from out of Gaeta, which we have stated Sir Sidney had so opportunely relieved.

All this had, however, but little effect upon the fate of the place, as it was enabled to hold out only until the 13th of July, and was then compelled to surrender to the French.

CHAPTER XXII.

Further operations for the recovery of Naples—Their inutility—Sir Sidney Smith receives the acknowledgments of their Sicilian Majesties—Remarks on naval appointments.

On the return of Sir Sidney Smith to Palermo, after the conclusion of this service, and a most harassing cruise to the enemy, the active turn and the sanguine temper of his mind induced him not only to enter into, but also to originate, projects that were, from time to time, suggested to the court, to second the King of the Sicilies' attempts for the recovery of Calabria from the invaders. Had all others, whose duty it was to carry these projects into execution, been actuated by half the zeal of Sir Sidney, and had they been possessed of enough humility and good sense to have followed in matters in which they were not qualified to lead, the re-conquest of Calabria would not have been long delayed.

The eager yet incompetent advisers of the King, finding the admiral thus favourably inclined towards the furtherance of their schemes, and the latter being most anxious to distinguish himself by some great exploit, their Sicilian Majesties invested him with the most ample authority to be exercised in Calabria, and they even went to the extent of constituting the British admiral their viceroy in that province.

But there were obstacles that even the energy of Sir Sidney Smith could not surmount. Though active and indefatigable in the duties of his new dignity, and successful in distributing arms and ammunition among the Calabrians, and a great deal of money among their leaders and influential men, he soon discovered, that unless an English army made its appearance in the country, there was not the remotest chance of producing an insurrection against the French.

It became, therefore, necessary for the court of Palermo either to abandon the fruit of all its intrigues and machinations, or to prevail on the commander of the English forces in Sicily to invade Calabria with the greatest part of his army. In this latter attempt the court succeeded.

The operations, after this, being strictly and almost exclusively military, they do not fall within our province to record. Of course, the admiral

had to attend to the safe and convenient conveyance of the troops to their destination—to provide for their comfort on board, and their safe debarkation on shore. All this was duly effected, and Sir John Stuart, with an army of four thousand five hundred effective men, shortly after gained that victory, than which one more honourable to the combatants, or more glorious to the arms of any nation, was never recorded—the victory of Maida.

Major-general Sir John Stuart, in his despatch, dated, "Camp on the plain of Maida, July 6, 1806," published in the London Gazette Extraordinary of September 5, of the same year, states as follows:

"The scene of action was too far from the sea to enable us to derive any direct co-operation from the navy: but Admiral Sir Sidney Smith, who had arrived in the bay the evening before the action, had directed such a disposition of ships and gun-boats as would have greatly favoured us, had events obliged us to retire. The solicitude, however, of every part of the navy to be of use to us, the promptitude with which the seamen hastened on shore with our supplies, their anxiety to assist our wounded, and the tenderness with which they treated them, would have been an affecting circumstance to observers, even the

most indifferent: to me it was particularly so."

This victory led to the desired insurrection, but it proved transient and unsuccessful. So sensible was Sir John Stuart of his inability to maintain the ground he had won in Calabria, that very shortly afterwards he withdrew all his forces from that country, with the exception of a garrison left at Scylla, and a detachment of the seventy-eighth regiment, under Colonel M'Leod, which had been sent in the Amphion frigate to the coast near Catangaro, in order to countenance and assist the insurgents in that quarter.

General Acland was also despatched to the Bay of Naples; and though he was not absolutely prohibited from landing his troops, yet was he directed not to expose them to that danger, unless he had the prospect of effecting some object of real and permanent utility.

During all these operations, Sir Sidney Smith was most actively, if not judiciously, employed along the coast, assisting the insurgents with arms and ammunition, supplying them with provisions, and conveying them from one place to another, in the vessels under his command. Though we doubt that all this was a judicious acting, yet the manner in which the rear-admiral performed it was most judicious and effective.

He had nothing to do with the policy of this conduct—he had only to see that it was well done—and well done indeed it was. His name became a very terror to the French.

By these unremitting exertions he contributed materially to extend the insurrection along the coast, and to expel the enemy from the watch-towers and the castles which they occupied upon the shore.

These spirited operations were, in some instances, of use, by securing a safer and better anchorage for his ships; but in others, we are bound to say, and it is with grief we say it, that the blood and treasure which they cost far exceeded the value of those temporary acquisitions.

In one of these adventures—for many of these exploits were more like the adventurous outbreaks of knight-errantry than the well-considered enterprises of modern warfare—he had in his own ship, the Pompée, a lieutenant and eight men killed, and thirty-four wounded, in an attack upon an insignificant fort on Point Licosa, which he destroyed when it fell into his hands.

It would, of itself, form a volume to detail all the services that he performed in this desultory warfare—services that really tended to no other result than to teach the seamen the art of gunnery, and to inure the ships' crews to the

excitement of constant action. Geatawas lost, the country became one scene of social disorganisation, and rapine and bloodshed prevailed wherever the human species congregated. The land was ruined and depopulated, whilst every place and post worth retaining still remained in the hands of the French. While things were in this state, Sir Sidney was called away to other duties.

The poor and despised court of Sicily was as grateful to Sir Sidney Smith as the bestowal of mere honours could prove them. The ex-vice-roy of Calabria received the orders of the Grand Cross of St. Ferdinand and of Merit, accompanied by a letter from the then reigning Queen, expressive of the regret felt by the royal family at his departure, and the utmost gratitude for his exertions in their cause.

The subjoined is a translation of the letter (from the French) from the Queen of the two Sicilies to Rear-Admiral Sir Sidney Smith, dated Palermo, January 25th, 1837, and enclosed in a packet that conveyed the order.

" My very worthy and dear Admiral,

" I cannot find sufficient expressions to convey the painful feeling which your departure (so very unforeseen) has caused, both to me and among my whole family. I can only tell you

that you are accompanied by our most sincere good wishes, and, more particularly on my part, by gratitude that will only cease with my life, for all that you have done for us; and for what you would still have done for us, if everything had not thwarted you, and cramped your zeal and enterprise.

"May you be as happy as my heart prays for you! And may you continue, by fresh laurels, to augment your own glory and the number of the envious. I still cherish the hope of seeing you again in better times, and of giving you proof of those sentiments which, at the present moment, I cannot express; but you will find, in all times and places, (whatever may be the fate reserved for us,) our hearts gratefully attached to you, even unto the grave.

"Pray make my sincere compliments to the Captain (Dacre) and to all the officers of Le Pompée, as well as my good wishes for their happiness. Assure them of the pain with which I witness their departure.

"I am, most truly, for life,

"Your very sincere and devoted friend,

"CHARLOTTE."

We are now going to inflict a digression upon the reader, but one intimately connected with

the subject-matter of these volumes, and bearing individually upon the usefulness and the great talent of Sir Sidney Smith. It consists in a consideration as to the best method of giving merit, and merit only, that due preponderance in the naval service, so that, when the greatest object is to be effected, the very best man should be appointed to effect it.

We need not to be informed that a military autocracy, vested in one sole person—an autocracy of a character so absolute that no one of its acts could ever be called in question, would be the best principle for making either an army or a navy perfect: we mean such a power as Bonaparte so advantageously and universally exercised over the troops that he commanded. But this power can never be used in a free country, and may we never see an approximation to it; therefore, in a mixed government like that of the British Empire it is a most difficult question to solve, that of discovering the most efficacious method of rendering all public services the most available for the good of those for whom they should be instituted—the public. It is but seldom that one isolated mistake of a civil servant can produce disastrous, perhaps fatal consequences: he has only to swim forward, borne quietly down on the stream of office, with etiquette for his compass,

custom for his helm, and precedent for his chart. So be it, for it is well that it is so.

But in the military, and still more stringently in the naval service, one act of incapacity, one moment's vacillation, and a ship is lost, a fleet destroyed, or the very salvation of a nation endangered. And how are these men appointed, on whom contingencies so awful depend? Like Cromwell's gallant Admiral, we meddle not with politics—we know it to be our primal duty, a duty sacred to good order and dear to humanity, to obey the powers that are legally constituted, however much we may condemn the policy of those who wield it, or despise their persons. We shall, therefore, without reference to this or that administration, fearlessly though briefly discuss a point so important in itself, and not irrelevant to our subject.

We freely confess that our hero, Sir Sidney Smith, sprang up to his glorious maturity from the very hotbed of corruption: but he was of a noble stock, and would have flourished in any soil. But this hotbed nourishes not only sluggish but poisonous weeds, and, for the sake of one Sir Sidney Smith, we are not willing to risk the honour and safety of the country to troops of such commanders-in-chief, naval or military, that one's heart burns to expose.

That promotion should take place in the navy solely by seniority is ridiculous. The sensible man and the fool, the gallant and cool sailor and the driveller and dastard, would have then equal chances of command, and the country be completely at the mercy of accident. Besides, to promote by seniority must necessarily throw the chief command into the hands of superannuated dotards, or, if these were to be provided for until the list showed an active man, the nation would be soon burthened with useless pensions, and the service made ridiculous by the then almost interminable multiplying of officers of rank. Seniority should have its weight in, but should not be the rule of, promotion. Yet as high commands are now gained by interests decidedly not naval, by courtly influences, by weight in parliament, by a bias most unjust, because carried to the extreme, in favour of the aristocracy, or to serve a party purpose, this system is still worse than the advancements of mere seniority. We have too often seen men in command of squadrons and of fleets, to whom we would not have entrusted the conduct of a flock of geese, even had they served seven years of apprenticeship to the humble but honest employment.

Well, then, it will be said, let merit determine the question. Alas ! who shall decide what me-

rit is? It is never the most distinguished officer that is the most meritorious, "Palmam ferat qui meruit," was a proud, a noble motto, and true also, and therefore the more noble. But it would be a libel, a gross calumny upon the British seamen of Nelson's glorious day, to say, though the hero bore the palm, that he the *most* deserved it—if mere merit had been the awarder.

A truly great man, as a naval commander, was the justly immortal Nelson. But we say it boldly, and we say it proudly, that in the fleet there were hundreds of men in every sense immeasurably better seamen, more skilful, and quite as brave as he the hero—whose memory no one can more deeply venerate than ourselves.

But who were they? It is a vain and an unfair question. The individuals cannot be pointed out, but they existed notwithstanding. They were hedged round by the rank weeds of favouritism—they were crushed down by the weight of authority—they lacked friends on shore and opportunities afloat—accident, that was the midwife to others, was, to them, the cause of abortions. It is ten millions of chances to one, that the single grain of gold in the vessel filled with sand shall be the uppermost.

It would then seem that the officers should be elected and promoted by the votes of those who

best understand, and are most immediately interested in their merit. That each ship should be, in itself, a floating, independent democracy, for certainly the crew of one vessel could not possibly be cognisant of the quantity or the quality of the talent in another. Already does the proposition begin to appear absurd, even before it is fully stated. The free discussion, the soliciting, the canvassing, the caballing—who would obey an irksome order, that knew he must be cajoled for his vote by the orderer?—the notion would be preposterous; and yet the crews are the only witnesses, the only true appreciators of nautical merit. As a mass, the seamen of the royal navy have ever been, and still are, a rightly-minded and shrewd body—they best know when their ship is well worked, well disciplined, well navigated, and well fought.

Another great and insurmountable objection exists to the principle of the power of self-election to commands being vested in the navy. Valuable, nay, beyond all value as is the service, still, it must be a service—a subordinate body to defend, and neither to intimidate nor control the nation for whose good it was created. Directly that they were made an independent body, relying upon themselves for promotion, and all the good

things the service has to resist, they would soon cease to be a service, for they would no longer be subservient. It may be said that there is always a check upon this fear of a naval usurpation, because the body of the people would cease to pay or to victual them, and thus, in a very short time, they must necessarily be subjugated.

But this reasoning would not hold good. Every one must perceive that, if the navy were to become a body distinct from and independent of the community, the army must become so too. The army, if the paramount power—as a military despotism—can always pay and victual itself from the resources of a prostrate country, and, in order to secure its power, it would immediately extend the privilege to the brother service, the navy.

Self-election must be vested in the members of neither the army nor the navy, if the liberties and the well-being of the community are to be preserved.

It then appears that those appointed by the forms of the country must still wield its naval and military powers—keep them under control—command them despotically—and distribute among their members all the prizes worth contending for. But, as yet, they have ever done, and must still do this, in comparative darkness and igno-

rance—a darkness and an ignorance that afford them the apology for the disgusting exercise of a patronage, that we boldly affirm is fast undermining the best interests of the navy. The high officials at home cannot tell who really the most deserve promotion, and thus, that promotion is bestowed, but too, too often on those who do not deserve it at all.

Now, these men in high places should no longer be permitted to shelter their gross and nefarious partialities under the plea of ignorance. The light should be brought to their very faces in spite of themselves, and then, if they wilfully and wickedly close their eyes against it, the country at large would know how properly to appreciate them.

To effect this, every ship's company, officers included, at stated intervals, should be called upon, as a duty, to recommend the most deserving among them as fit objects for promotion; at the same time it should be fully understood, that it was not to be looked upon as a rule that actual promotion should follow such nomination: the names of those persons thus virtuously distinguished should be published duly in the Gazette. This alone would be a great check upon unfair private patronage.

We well know that a system of secretly reporting to the Admiralty, by the captain of each vessel, has long existed; we also know, that such reports are but seldom acted upon excepting the reporter have other influence, not connected with his official station. We are glad of this; for what is this reporting but nursing in the mind of the captain all bad tendencies, pandering to his spirit of favouritism, of pique, of revenge: he becomes, in reality, nothing better than a dignified spy — we will allow that the majority exercise this function with discrimination and impartiality—we sincerely believe that they do; but the mischief that the few evil-disposed among them may cause, by far outbalances the very uncertain good.

That accident, that seniority, and that blind patronage, have promoted admirals to important and extensive commands, is but too disgracefully true in the annals of our naval history. We have ourselves served under men at once tyrannical, brutal, and fatuous — animals of such limited intelligence, that we would not have entrusted to them the most insignificant command;—we have seen such men manœuvring fleets, with the safety and welfare of thousands at their disposal; and, still more revolting, with

the power of life and death in their hands. We will mention no names, but only refer to those commanders-in-chief, who once were a by-word and a mockery in the navy, of whom the most ridiculous stories were continually told, and who were really so stolid, that no story, however ridiculous, was too absurd to admit them as its heroes.

We deny not that even victories have been gained under the names of these men, and well-written despatches have given a false impression to their countrymen of their worth and of their services. But if so much have been achieved under such imbecility, how much more would have been performed under men of activity and talent, and who had been recommended by those who knew them, to their respective commands, before they had been promoted to them.

We do not mean that this power of recommendation should be anything but a limited one. The navy must be under the control of the high civil authorities; it should be taught obedience to the constituted powers, and patriotism and loyalty impressed upon it to the utmost. We know all this, so much to be desired, might be fully attained, although the navy should be permitted at intervals, but not frequently, to name those

of its own body who deserve well of their country, and upon whom promotion, if bestowed, would be bestowed worthily.

In resuming the course of our narrative, we think that it will be acknowledged, that, notwithstanding the great merit, and the enlightened bravery of the commander-in-chief, to whom the expedition against Constantinople was entrusted, had the conduct of it fallen to the lot of Sir Sidney, or the wish of the fleet been consulted, other and more brilliant results would have attended the British arms. We say this hesitatingly, for who can safely speculate upon mere probabilities? But we speak more decidedly when we say, that had it been demanded who, of all naval officers then fit for service, was the very best to have had the sole direction of this nice experiment upon the Turks, common sense would have replied "our officer," and the applause of the navy would have been the echo to the sentence. That we are not singular in our opinion, we quote the following extract from a publication cotemporary with the proceedings.

"As impartial observers, it seems to us that there were several circumstances which ought to have pointed out Sir Sidney Smith as the most proper officer that could be selected for the con-

duct of an expedition against Constantinople. His local knowledge of the country, it is thought, might have been an object of some consideration: he spoke the language; he had proved himself the saviour of the Ottoman empire, at St. John of Acre; and he had been accredited as a joint minister plenipotentiary to the then reigning sultan, Selim III. Yet, palpably absurd as it must appear, he was taken from the active station of Sicily, where he commanded, and placed, not *first*, nor SECOND, but THIRD in command of an expedition, of which he alone was competent to be the commander-in-chief! and, as an aggravation of this absurdity, when on the spot, he was not employed in the only diplomatic part of the proceedings which Sir John Duckworth entrusted out of his own hands! At the very time that the commander-in-chief was complimenting Sir Sidney Smith, Sir Thomas Louis was officiating as his deputed diplomatic agent!"

Let us again repeat, that we mean nothing invidious against Sir John Duckworth; his name stands deservedly high in the naval records of his country; more than one splendid victory have been gained under his flag, and the navy are indebted to him for many very facetious stories. Having thus done him all the justice

that his warmest admirers can demand, we may be permitted to say, that he was not the best commander who could have been selected cunningly to display a force that he was not to employ, but under extremities, against a power in possession of much greater force, and possessing infinitely more cunning than himself.

On this delicate and very important subject we have been favoured with the enlightened and highly honourable opinion of Captain Montagu Montagu, who served under Sir John, as flag-lieutenant, in the memorable expedition which we are about to relate. We had candidly submitted our idea to the Captain, that Sir Sidney Smith would have been, for that particular service, a more efficient commander. Captain Montagu's reply was as follows:

"History is stern,—she deals alone in *facts*, and makes no compromise with actions, as her business is—above all—truth. But, at the same time, she also estimates motives, as far as they can fairly be traced, and—still more—*circumstances*, which are, in fact, the deponing witnesses of that to which general reasoning is but the presumptive evidence. A Chief, and he alone, has upon him the *responsibility* of command, and which is not

of a simple—but very compound nature,—in the discriminating obedience he owes to his orders, the reference to public opinion—not that of the vulgar, and lastly—regard to his own conscience, which, to one of a mind suitable to his station, is most serious—an immense charge; considering that, in naval warfare, besides the ships' companies—numerous invaluable lives, the supremacy as well as the honour of his country's flag, are all confided to his care.

"No one who has not been invested with command can sufficiently estimate its weight; and I will say more,—that none can judge of the just line of conduct to be pursued in any specific case but he who has to decide upon it. Others, feeling their own powers, might perhaps fancy they would have done more than those who may be thought to have done too little, who, if in their place, would have found that more was not to be done. And, as for those who know not the seriousness of that responsibility,—and—still less—juniors and subordinates, who have to fear neither condemnation—censure—nor self-reproach, with whom, naturally, every advance is a triumph and miscarriage is only 'the fortune of war,'—little store will be set on their opinions by those who have passed the age of first hope, who have

added reflection to experience, and—above all—who are not interested in the decision.

"That Sir Sidney would have 'dared all that may become a man,' nobody will for a moment doubt. That he may have imagined that he might have accomplished more, is also possible; but even he cannot say he would have done so. It is not unlikely, that, certainly better acquainted as he was with the character of the Turks than Sir John Duckworth, and both more sanguine and more adventurous, he would, in negociating with them, have used more of both cajolery and menace: he would have glittered brightlier, and have frowned more darkly: but it may be altogether doubted, whether this would have been one whit more successful than the dignified severity of his older chief; for it would not have been backed by one gun more, nor would all his skill, suavity, and determination have drawn one breath more wind to bring the British broadsides to bear on the Seven Towers.

"So long as circumstances prevented the Squadron from *acting*, and every hour made that acting less to be feared—from the preparations making to resist it, the Turks were not to be hectored into submission; and Izaac Bey (whom I well remember) with all his long beard and his

Mussulman impassibility, was, at short-handed diplomacy, a match for the most wily European.

"This was the second time that Sir John Duckworth had been placed in these most trying and cruel circumstances; the first, two years before, in the presence of a French squadron; of appearing to decline an encounter with the enemy. But, in both, I am persuaded that Time, the great truth-teller and retributor—though often a sadly slow one, has done him ample justice; and re-echoed the voice of his own conscience, the noblest approver of a good man, as he was, who submitted to obloquy for doing what he felt to be right, where less scrupulous or reflecting men would have hazarded all for the gratification of their own personal vanity—for an applause that is seldom refused to an Englishman who fights, though with an utter disregard to the real interests of his Country.

"From what I have said, then, you may infer my opinion on the subject; though, even if it were different, and I could incline to your view, you could not expect me to alter it, attached as I was to the good and brave man, whose conduct on this important occasion it goes to call in question. My conscientious persuasion—my conviction—is altogether in his favour and against your

conclusion; as, I firmly believe, was that of all the senior officers of the squadron.

"I must, then, leave you altogether to yourself in this matter; merely suggesting the danger, in all cases of this sort, of an over—though natural, as scarcely avoidable—partiality for one's hero.

"As minutes of evidence are always of use, though those of a log-book or a ship's journal, from their cut and dry record of facts, are not very amusing, I send you a copy of the flag ship's log for the time actually engaged, that is—from our appearing before to after repassing the Dardanelles," &c. &c.

The gallant officer thus concludes:

"I will only add, that, with the exception of the greatly calamitous Walcheren expedition, this to Constantinople was the most crudely planned—rash—and insufficient, that—to use the term—ever left the British shores; and that, as it was, its escape from destruction was next to miraculous."

We are now about to narrate the expedition, and, if we still feel induced to suppose that it would better have prospered under the control of Sir Sidney Smith, we think so, solely because he had more accidental advantages for its happy

accomplishment than Sir John Thomas Duckworth.

But before we proceed to it, we must devote one chapter to some very important affairs that were transacting in England at the time, and which materially affected the character of our officer.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Princess of Wales's vindication against the charges affecting her and Sir Sidney Smith.

WHILE Sir Sidney Smith was thus actively and usefully employed in the service of his country abroad, men's minds were put almost into an universal agitation by a most delicate investigation at home, an investigation that deeply implicated the honour of the future Queen of England, together with that of many persons of high character, some of whom had made the nation their debtors by the value of their official exertions, and, among these, we are sorry to say, that our hero stood prominently forward.

It was the natural consequences of Sir Sidney's brilliant achievements, and his position in society, to be much sought for, and greatly admired.

To these advantages he added a graceful vivacity of manner, tinctured, at times, with an eccentricity as engaging as it was original. These physical advantages, and the fluency of his conversation, replete with anecdote, made him a dangerous man in female society, to which, we are bound to state, he was always most chivalrously partial.

His high connexions, and his deserved reputation, at length brought him within the circle over which Caroline Princess of Wales presided with so much imprudence and good-heartedness. His conduct, at that period, will ever be involved in an impenetrable darkness—a darkness made the more deep and inscrutable by the solemn and yet ridiculous attempts of commissioners and privy counsellors to dispel it. We have carefully perused and reperused all the depositions sworn to as affecting the continence of that unfortunate Princess, during her residence on Blackheath, and the only safe conclusion at which we can arrive is, that the laxity of morals, and the licentiousness of the manners of almost all concerned in that investigation, make us feel shame for the conduct, with but a few exceptions, for all the parties concerned.

Whether the attractions of Sir Sidney Smith, were only incitements to, or actually the cause of

criminality with the Princess, he now only knows. That he was much in her society, that his conversation amused and his attentions pleased this unfortunate woman, cannot be doubted. It is also no less certain that he was discovered in her company at times, and in situations, that neither befitted her rank, nor his position as a future subject to the heir apparent.

This intercourse, of whatever nature it might have been, continued with unabated strictness for several months. To render it the more uninterrupted, Sir Sidney went and partly resided with his old companion in arms, Sir John Douglas, the husband of that Lady Douglas who, throughout these transactions, procured for herself an unenviable notoriety.

Having thus made himself conveniently proximate to the Princess, he was seen for weeks daily in her society; and being thus unguarded in his conduct, he gave too much scope for the voice of scandal to breathe guilt upon the fame of a person, already too much open to suspicion, and, as moralists, we are bound to say, to leave a stain of no very light dye upon his own.

We wish to tread lightly upon the ashes of the dead, who, when living, we think was hardly dealt with. We shall, therefore, not go into details of the evidence which imputed criminality

to our officer, but merely state that, first, a coldness, and then a quarrel, having occurred between him and the object of his attentions, he shortly after forsook her society altogether, and was soon after found most actively employed in that scene so natural to his genius, and so conducive to his own fame and his country's glory.

The following is a description of Sir Sidney's appearance at the time of his acquaintance with the princess, to whom the world so generally gave him as a favoured lover. He had an air of general smartness, and was extremely gentlemanly in his deportment. He had a good-humoured, agreeable manner with him, with a certain dash and turn of chivalry that was very taking with the ladies. We are not using our own words,—but the very expressive ones of a good judge upon these matters.

He used then to wear mustachios; they were not then vulgarised, as now; which fashion he had adopted when so much associated with the Turks. He was about the middle height, rather under than over, and of slender construction, which much helped his activity. He was generally very showily dressed, perhaps with some singularity; but there was not a particle of coxcombry about him. In features, he something resembled Bernadotte, though with not so promi-

nent a facial angle. The countenance of Southey the poet still more closely resembled that of Sir Sidney Smith, when both were in their younger days.

The following is the best means in our possession of vindicating Sir Sidney Smith's character, being an extract from the letter dated 2d of October, 1806, that the Princess of Wales sent to his Majesty George the Third.

"And I will begin with those which respect Sir Sidney Smith, as he is the person first mentioned in the deposition of W. Cole.

"W. Cole says,' "that Sir Sidney Smith first visited at Montague-house in 1802; that he observed that the princess was too familiar with Sir Sidney Smith. One day, he thinks in February, he (Cole) carried into the blue room to the princess some sandwiches which she had ordered, and was surprised to see that Sir Sidney was there. He must have come in from the park. If he had been let in from Blackheath he must have passed through the room in which he (Cole) was waiting. When he had left the sandwiches, he returned, after some time, into the room, and Sir Sidney Smith was sitting very close to the princess on the sofa: he (Cole) looked at her Royal Highness; she caught his eye, and saw that he noticed the manner in

which they were sitting together; they appeared both a little confused."

"R. Bidgood says also, in his deposition on the 6th of June, (for he was examined twice,) "that it was early in 1802 that he first observed Sir Sidney Smith come to Montague-house. He used to stay very late at night; he had seen him early in the morning there; about ten or eleven o'clock. He was at Sir John Douglas's, and was in the habit, as well as Sir John and Lady Douglas, of dining, or having luncheon, or supping there every day. He saw Sir Sidney Smith one day in 1802 in the blue room, about eleven o'clock in the morning, which was full two hours before they expected ever to see company. He asked the servants why they did not let him know Sir Sidney Smith was there; the footmen told him that they had let no person in. There was a private door to the park, by which he might have come in if he had a key to it, and have got into the blue room without any of the servants perceiving him. And in his second deposition, taken on the 3d of July, he says he lived at Montague-house when Sir Sidney came. Her (the princess) manner with him appeared very familiar; she appeared very attentive to him, but he did not suspect anything further. Mrs. Lisle says, that the princess at one time ap-

peared to like Sir John and Lady Douglas. 'I have seen Sir Sidney Smith there very late in the evening, but not alone with the princess. I have no reason to suspect he had a key of the park-gate; I never heard of anybody being found wandering about at Blackheath.'

"Fanny Lloyd does not mention Sir Sidney Smith in her deposition.

"Upon the whole of this evidence then, which is the whole that respects Sir Sidney Smith, in any of these depositions, (except some particular passages in Cole's evidence, which are so important as to require very particular and distinct statement,) I would request your Majesty to understand, that, with respect to the fact of Sir Sidney Smith's visiting frequently at Montague-house, both with Sir John and Lady Douglas, and without them; with respect to his being frequently there at luncheon, dinner, and supper, and staying with the rest of the company till twelve, one o'clock, or even sometimes later,— if these are some of the facts 'which must give occasion to unfavourable interpretations, and must be credited till they are contradicted,' they are facts which I never can contradict, for they are perfectly true. And I trust it will imply the confession of no guilt, to admit that Sir Sidney Smith's conversation, his account of the

various and extraordinary events, and heroic achievements in which he had been concerned, amused and interested me; and the circumstance of his living so much with his friends, Sir John and Lady Douglas, in my neighbourhood on Blackheath, gave the opportunity of his increasing his acquaintance with me.

"It happened also that about this time I fitted up, as your Majesty may have observed, one of the rooms in my house after the fashion of a Turkish tent. Sir Sidney furnished me with a pattern for it, in a drawing of the tent of Murat Bey, which he had brought over with him from Egypt. And he taught him how to draw Egyptian arabesques, which were necessary for the ornaments of the ceiling: this may have occasioned, while that room was fitting up, several visits, and possibly some, though I do not recollect them, as early in the morning as Mr. Bidgood mentions. I believe also, that it has happened more than once, that walking with my ladies in the park, we have met Sir Sidney Smith, and that he has come in with us through the gate from the park. My ladies may have gone up to take off their cloaks, or to dress, and have left me alone with him: and, at some one of these times, it may very possibly have happened that Mr. Cole and Mr. Bidgood may have

seen him, when he has not come through the waiting-room, nor been let in by any of the footmen. But I solemnly declare to your Majesty, that I have not the least idea or belief that he ever had a key of the gate into the park, or that he ever entered in or passed out at that gate, except in company with myself and my ladies. As for the circumstance of my permitting him to be in the room alone with me; if suffering a man to be so alone is evidence of guilt from whence the commissioners can draw any unfavourable inference, I must leave them to draw it, for I cannot deny that it has happened, and happened frequently; not only with Sir Sidney Smith, but with many, many others; gentlemen who have visited me; tradesmen who have come to receive my orders; masters whom I have had to instruct me in painting, in music, in English, &c., that I have received them without any one being by. In short, I trust I am not confessing a crime, for unquestionably it is a truth, that I never had an idea that there was anything wrong or objectionable in thus seeing men in the morning, and I confidently believe your Majesty will see nothing in it from which any guilt can be inferred. I feel certain that there is nothing immoral in the thing itself; and I have always understood that it was perfectly customary and usual for ladies of

the first rank and the first character in the country, to receive the visits of gentlemen in a morning, though they might be themselves alone at the time. But if, in the opinions and fashions of this country, there should be more impropriety ascribed to it than what it ever entered into my mind to conceive, I hope your Majesty, and every candid mind, will make allowance for the different notions which my foreign education and foreign habits may have given me.

"But whatever character may belong to this practice, it is not a practice which commenced after my leaving Carlton-house. While there, and from my first arrival in this country, I was accustomed, with the knowledge of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and without his ever having hinted to me the slightest disapprobation, to receive lessons from various masters, for my amusement and improvement; I was attended by them frequently from twelve o'clock till five in the afternoon;—Mr. Atwood for music, Mr. Geffadiere for English, Mr. Tourfronelli for painting, Mr. Tutoye for imitating marble, Mr. Elwes for the harp. I saw them all alone; and, indeed, if I were to see them at all, I could do no otherwise than see them alone. Miss Garth, who was then sub-governess to my daughter, lived certainly under the same roof with me,

but she could not be spared from her duty and attendance on my daughter. I desired her sometimes to come down stairs, and read to me, during the time when I drew or painted, but my Lord Cholmondeley informed me this could not be. I then requested that I might have one of my bed-chamber women to live constantly at Carlton-house, that I might have her at call whenever I wanted her; but I was answered that it was not customary that the attendants of the royal family should live with them in town; so that request could not be complied with. But, independent of this, I never conceived that it was offensive to the fashions and manners of the country to receive gentlemen who might call upon me in a morning, whether I had or had not any one with me; and it never occurred to me to think that there was either impropriety or indecorum in it, at that time, nor in continuing the practice at Montague-house. But this has been confined to morning visits, in no private apartments in my house, but in my drawing-room, where my ladies have at all times free access, and as they usually take their luncheon with me, except when they are engaged with visiters or pursuits of their own, it could but rarely occur that I could be left with any gentleman alone for any length of time, unless

there were something, in the known and avowed business, which might occasion his waiting upon me, that would fully account for the circumstance.

"I trust your Majesty will excuse the length at which I have dwelt upon this topic. I perceived, from the examinations, that it had been much inquired after, and I felt it necessary to represent it in its true light. And the candour of your Majesty's mind will, I am confident, suggest that those who are the least conscious of intending guilt are the least suspicious of having it imputed to them: and therefore that they do not think it necessary to guard themselves at every turn, with witnesses to prove their innocence, fancying their character to be safe as long as their conduct is innocent, and that guilt will not be imputed to them from actions quite different.

"The deposition, however, of Mr. Cole, is not confined to my being alone with Sir Sidney Smith. The circumstance in which he observed us together he particularises, and states his opinion. He introduces, indeed, the whole of the evidence by saying, that I was too familiar with Sir Sidney Smith; but as I trust I am not yet so far degraded as to have my character decided by the opinion of Mr. Cole, I shall not comment upon that observa-

tion. He then proceeds to describe the scene which he observed on the day when he brought in the sandwiches, which I trust your Majesty did not fail to notice, *I had myself ordered to be brought in.* For there is an obvious insinuation that Sir Sidney must have come in through the park, and that there was great impropriety in his being alone with me. And at least the witness's own story proves, whatever impropriety there might be in this circumstance, that I was not conscious of it, nor meant to take advantage of his clandestine entry from the park, to conceal the fact from my servant's observation. For if I had had such consciousness, or such meaning, I never could have ordered sandwiches to have been brought in, or any other act to have been done which must have brought myself under the notice of my servants, while I continued in a situation which I thought improper and wished to conceal. Any of the circumstances of this visit, to which this part of the deposition refers, my memory does not enable me in the least degree to particularise and recal. Mr. Cole may have seen me sitting on the same sofa with Sir Sidney Smith. Nay, I have no doubt he must have seen me over and over again, not only with Sir Sidney Smith, but with other gentlemen, sitting upon the same sofa; and I trust your Majesty will feel it the hardest thing imaginable, that

I should be called upon to account what corner of a sofa I sat upon four years ago, and how close Sir Sidney Smith was sitting to me. I can only solemnly aver to your Majesty, that my conscience supplies me with the fullest means of confidently assuring you, that I never permitted Sir Sidney Smith to sit on any sofa with me in any manner, which in my own judgment was in the slightest degree offensive to the strictest propriety and decorum. In the judgment of many persons, perhaps, a Princess of Wales should at no time forget the elevation of her rank, or descend in any degree to the familiarities and intimacies of private life. Under any circumstances, this would be a hard condition to be annexed to her situation. Under the circumstances, in which it has been my misfortune to have lost the necessary support to the dignity and station of a Princess of Wales, to have assumed and maintained an unbending dignity would have been impossible, and, if possible, could hardly have been expected from me.

"After these observations, sire, I must now request your Majesty's attention to those written declarations which are mentioned in the report, and which I shall never be able sufficiently to thank your Majesty for having condescended, in compliance with my earnest request, to order to be trans-

mitted to me. From observations upon these declarations themselves, as well as upon comparing them with the depositions made before the commissioners, your Majesty will see the strongest reason for discrediting the testimony of W. Cole, as well as others of these witnesses, whose credit stands, in the opinion of the commissioners, so unimpeachable. They supply important observations, even with respect to that part of Mr. Cole's evidence which I am now considering, though in no degree equal in importance to those which I shall afterwards have occasion to notice.

"Your Majesty will please to observe, that there are no less than four different examinations or declarations of Mr. Cole. They are dated on the 11th, 14th, and 30th of January, and on 23rd of February. In these four different declarations he twice mentions the circumstances of finding Sir Sidney Smith and myself on the sofa, and he mentions it not only in a different manner, at each of these times, but at both of them in a manner which materially differs from his deposition before the commissioners. In his declaration on the 11th of January, he says, that he found us in so *familiar* a posture, as to *alarm* him very much, which he expressed by a *start back* and a look at the gentleman.

"In that dated on 23rd of February, however,

(being asked, I suppose as to that which he had dared to assert, of the familiar posture which had alarmed him so much,) he says, 'there was *nothing particular* in our dress, *position* of legs or arms, that was extraordinary; he thought it improper that a single gentleman should be sitting quite close to a married lady on the sofa, and from *that* situation, and *former observations*, he thought the thing improper. In the second account, therefore, your Majesty perceives he was obliged to bring in his former observation to help out the statement, in order to account for his having been so shocked with what he saw, as to express his alarm by 'starting back.' But unfortunately he accounts for it, as it seems to me at least, by the very circumstance which would have induced him to have been less surprised, and consequently less startled by what he saw; for had his former observations been such as he insinuates, he would have been prepared the more to expect, and the less to be surprised at, what he pretends to have seen.

"But your Majesty will observe, that in his deposition before the commissioners, (recollecting, perhaps, how awkwardly he had accounted for his starting in his former declaration,) he drops his starting altogether. Instead of looking at the gentleman only, he looked at us both; that I caught his eye, and saw that he noticed the manner in

which we were sitting, and instead of his own starting, or any description of the manner in which he exhibited his own feelings, we are represented as both appearing a *little confused.* Our *confusion* is a circumstance, which, during his four declarations, which he made before the appointment of the commissioners, it never once occurred to him to recollect. And now he does recollect it, we appeared, he says, 'a little confused.'—A little confused!—The Princess of Wales detected in a situation such as to shock and alarm her servant, and so detected as to be sensible of her detection, and so conscious of the impropriety of the situation as to exhibit symptoms of confusion; would not her confusion have been extreme? would it have been so little as to have slipped the memory of the witness who observed it, during his first four declarations, and at last to be recalled to his recollection in such a manner as to be represented in the faint and feeble way in which he here describes it.

"What weight your Majesty will ascribe to these differences in the accounts given by this witness, I cannot pretend to say. But I am ready to confess that, probably, if there was nothing stronger of the same kind to be observed in other parts of his testimony, the inference which would be drawn from them would depend very

much upon the opinion previously entertained of the witness. To me, who know many parts of his testimony to be absolutely false, and all the colouring given to it to be wholly from his own wicked and malicious invention, it appears plain, that these differences in his representations are the unsteady, awkward shuffles and prevarications of falsehood. To those, if there are any such, who from preconceived prejudices in his favour, or from any other circumstances, think that his veracity is free from all suspicion, satisfactory means of reconciling them may possibly occur. But before I have left Mr. Cole's examinations, your Majesty will find that they will have much more to account for, and much more to reconcile.

"Mr. Cole's examination before the commissioners goes on thus:—'A short time before this, one night about twelve o'clock, I saw a man go into the house from the park, wrapt up in a great-coat. I did not give any alarm, for the impression on my mind was, that it was not a thief.' When I read this passage, sire, I could hardly believe my eyes; when I found such a fact left in this dark state, without any farther explanation, or without a trace, in the examination, of any attempt to get it further explained. How he got this impression on his mind, that this was not a thief? whom he believed it to be? what part of

the house he saw him enter? if the drawing-room, or any part which I usually occupy, who was there at the time? whether I was there? whether alone or with my ladies? or with other company? whether he told anybody of the circumstance at the time? or how long after? whom he told? whether any inquiries were made in consequence? these, and a thousand other questions, with a view to have penetrated into the mystery of this strange story, and to have tried the credit of this witness, would, I should have thought, have occurred to any one; but certainly must have occurred to persons so experienced and so able in the examination of facts, and the trying of the credit of witnesses, as the two learned lords unquestionably are, whom your Majesty took care to have introduced into this commission. They never could have permitted these unexplained, and unsifted hints and insinuations to have had the weight and effect of proof.—But, unfortunately for me, the duties, probably of their respective situations, prevented their attendance on the examination of this, and on the first examination of another most important witness, Mr. Robert Bidgood—and surely your Majesty will permit me here, without offence, to complain that it is not a little hard, that, when your Majesty had shown your anxiety to have legal accuracy,

and legal experience assist on this examination, the two most important witnesses, in whose examinations there is more matter for unfavourable interpretation than in all the rest put together, should have been examined without the benefit of this accuracy, and this experience. And I am the better justified in making this observation, if what has been suggested to me is correct; that if it shall not be allowed that the power of administering an oath under this warrant or commission is questionable, yet it can hardly be doubted that it is most questionable, whether, according to the terms or meaning of the warrant or commission, as it constitutes no *quorum*, Lord Spencer and Lord Glenville could administer an oath, or act in the absence of the other Lords; and if they could not, Mr. Cole's falsehood must be out of the reach of punishment.

" Returning then from this digression, will your Majesty permit me to ask, whether I am to understand this fact, respecting the man in a great-coat, to be one of those which must necessarily give occasion to the most unfavourable interpretations; which must be credited till decidedly contradicted? and which, if true, deserve the most serious consideration? The unfavourable interpretations which this fact may occasion, doubtless are, that this man was either

Sir Sidney Smith, or some other *paramour*, who was admitted by me into my house in disguise at midnight, for the accomplishment of my wicked and adulterous purposes. And is it possible that your Majesty—is it possible that any candid mind can believe this fact, with the unfavourable interpretations which it occasions, on the relation of a servant, who, for all that appears, mentions it for the first time four years after the event took place? and who gives, himself, this picture of his honesty and fidelity to a master whom he has served so long, that he, whose nerves are of so moral a frame that he starts at seeing a single man sitting at mid-day in an open drawing-room, on the same sofa with a married woman, permitted this disguised midnight adulterer to approach his master's bed without taking any notice, without making any alarm, without offering any interruption? And why? because (as he expressly states) he did not believe him to be a thief: and because (as he plainly insinuates) he did believe him to be an adulterer.

"But what makes the manner in which the commissioners suffered this fact to remain so unexplained, the more extraordinary, is this: Mr. Cole had, in his original declaration of the 11th of January, which was before the commissioners,

stated, 'that one night, about twelve o'clock, he saw a person wrapped up in a great-coat, go across the park into the gate at the green-house, and he verily believes it was Sir Sidney Smith.' In his declaration then, (when he was not upon oath) he ventures to state, 'that he verily believes it was Sir Sidney Smith.' When he is upon his oath in his deposition before the commissioners, all that he ventures to swear is, "that he gave no alarm, because the impression upon his mind was, that it was not a thief!' And the difference is most important, 'The impression upon his mind was, that it was not a thief!' I believe him, and the impression upon my mind too is, that he *knew* it was not a thief—that he knew who it was—and that he knew it was no other than *my watchman.* What incident it is that he alludes to, I cannot pretend to know. But this I know, that if it refers to any man with whose proceedings I have the least acquaintance or privity, it must have been my watchman, who, if he executes my orders, nightly, and often in the night goes his rounds, both inside and outside out of my house. And this circumstance, which I should think would rather afford, to most minds, an inference that I was not preparing the way of planning facilities for secret midnight assignations, has, in my conscience, I

believe, (if there is one word of truth in any part of this story, and the whole of it is not pure invention,) afforded the handle, and suggested the idea, to this honest, trusty man, this witness, 'who cannot be suspected of any unfavourable bias,' 'whose veracity in that respect the commissioners saw no ground to question,' and 'who must be credited till he received decided contradiction,'—suggested, I say, the idea of the dark and vile insinuation contained in this part of his testimony.

"Whether I am right or wrong, however, in this conjecture, this appears to be evident, that his examination is so left, that supposing an indictment for perjury or false swearing would lie against any witness examined by the commissioners, and supposing this examination had been taken before the whole four. If Mr. Cole was indicted for perjury in respect to this part of his deposition, the proof that he did see the watchman would necessarily acquit him; would establish the truth of what he said, and rescue him from the punishment of perjury, though it would at the same time prove the falsehood and injustice of the inference, and the insinuation, for the establishment of which alone, the fact itself was sworn.

"Mr. Cole chooses further to state, that he

ascribes his removal from Montague-house to London to the discovery he had made, and the notice he had taken of the improper situation of Sir Sidney Smith with me upon the sofa. To this I can oppose little more than my own assertions, as my motives can only be known to myself. But Mr. Cole was a very disagreeable servant to me; he was a man who, as I always conceived, had been educated above his station. He talked French, and was a musician, playing well on the violin. By these qualifications he had got admitted, occasionally, into better company, and this probably led to that forward and obtrusive conduct which I thought extremely offensive and impertinent in a servant. I had long been extremely displeased with him; I had discovered, that when I went out he would come into my drawing-room, and play on my harpsichord, or sit there reading my books;—and, in short, there was a forwardness which would have led to my absolutely discharging him a long time before, if I had not made a sort of rule to myself, to forbear, as long as possible, from removing any servant who had been placed about me by his Royal Highness. Before Mr. Cole lived with the prince, he had lived with the Duke of Devonshire, and I had reason to believe that he carried to Devonshire-house all the observa-

tions he could make at mine. For these various reasons, just before the Duke of Kent was about to go out of the kingdom, I requested his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, who had been good enough to take the trouble of arranging many particulars in my establishment, to make the arrangements with respect to Mr. Cole; which was to leave him in town to wait upon me only when I went to Carlton-house, and not to come to Montague-house except when specially required. This arrangement, it seems, offended him. It certainly deprived him of some perquisites which he had when living at Blackheath; but, upon the whole, as it left him so much more of his time at his own disposal, I should not have thought it had been much to his prejudice. It seems, however, that he did not like it; and I must leave this part of the case with this one observation more—That your Majesty, I trust, will hardly believe, that if Mr. Cole had, by any accident, discovered any improper conduct of mine towards Sir Sidney Smith, or any one else, the way which I should have taken to suppress his information, to close his mouth, would not have been by immediately adopting an arrangement in my family, with regard to him, which was either prejudicial or disagreeable to him; or that the way to remove him from the opportunity

and the temptation of betraying my secret, whether through levity or design, in the quarter where it would be most fatal to me that it should be known, was by making an arrangement which, while all his resentment and anger were fresh and warm about him, would place him frequently, nay, almost daily, at Carlton-house; would place him precisely at that place from whence, unquestionably, it must have been my interest to have kept him as far removed as possible.

"There is little or nothing in the examinations of the other witnesses which is material for me to observe upon, as far as respects this part of the case. It appears from them, indeed, what I have had no difficulty in admitting, and have observed upon before, that Sir Sidney Smith was frequently at Montague-house — that they have known him to be alone with me in the morning, but that they never knew him to be alone with me in an evening, or staying later than my company or the ladies; for what Mr. Stikeman says, with respect to his being alone with me in an evening, can only mean, and is only reconcileable with all the rest of the evidence on this part of the case, by its being understood, to mean alone, in respect to other company, but not alone in the absence of my ladies. The deposition, indeed, of my servant, S. Roberts, is thus far ma-

terial upon that point, that it exhibits Mr. Cole, not less than three years ago, endeavouring to collect evidence upon these points to my prejudice. For your Majesty will find that he says, 'I recollect Mr. Cole once asking me, I think three years ago, whether there were any favourites in the family. I remember saying that Captain Manby and Sir Sidney Smith were frequently at Blackheath, and dined there oftener than other persons.' He then proceeds—'I never knew Sir Sidney Smith stay later than the ladies; I cannot exactly say at what time he went, but I never remember his staying alone with the Princess."

"As to what is contained in the written declarations of Mr. and Mrs. Lampert, the old servants of Sir John and Lady Douglas, (as from some circumstance or other respecting, I conceive, either their credit, or their supposed importance,) the commissioners have not thought proper to examine them upon their oaths, I do not imagine your Majesty would expect that I should take any notice of them. And as to what is deposed by my Lady Douglas, if your Majesty will observe the gross and horrid indecencies with which she ushers in and states my confessions to her, of my asserted criminal intercourse with Sir Sidney Smith, your Majesty, I am con-

fident, will not be surprised that I do not descend to any particular observations on her deposition. One, and only one, observation will I make, which, however, could not have escaped your Majesty, if I had omitted it. That your Majesty will have an excellent portraiture of the true female delicacy and purity of my Lady Douglas's mind and character, when you will observe that she seems wholly insensible to what a sink of infamy she degrades herself by her testimony against me. It is not only that it appears, from her statement, that she was contented to live in familiarity and apparent friendship with me, after the confession which I made of my adultery, (for by the indulgence and liberality, as it is called, of modern manners, the company of adulteresses has ceased to reflect that discredit upon the characters of other women who admit them to their society, which the best interests of female virtue may perhaps require;) but she was contented to live in familiarity with a woman, who, if Lady Douglas's evidence of me is true, was a most low, vulgar, and profligate disgrace to her sex; the grossness of whose ideas and conversation would add infamy to the lowest, most vulgar, and most infamous prostitute. It is not, however, upon this circumstance that I rest assured no reliance can be placed on Lady Douglas's testi-

mony; but after what is proved, with regard to her evidence respecting my pregnancy and delivery in 1802, I am certain that any observations upon her testimony or her veracity must be flung away.

"Your Majesty has, therefore, now before you the state of the charge against me, as far as it respects Sir Sidney Smith. And this is, as I understand the report, one of the charges *which, with its unfavourable interpretations, must, in the opinion of the commissioners, be credited till decidedly contradicted.*

"As to the facts of frequent visiting on terms of great intimacy, as I have said before, they cannot be contradicted at all. How inferences and unfavourable interpretations are to be decidedly contradicted, I wish the commissioners had been so good as to explain. I know of no possible way but by the declarations of myself and Sir Sidney Smith. Yet we, being the supposed guilty parties, our denial, probably, will be thought of no great weight. As to my own, however, I tender it to your Majesty in the most solemn manner; and if I knew what fact it was that I ought to contradict, to clear my innocence, I would precisely address myself to that fact, as I am confident my conscience would enable me to do, to any, from which a criminal or an unbecoming inference could be drawn. I am sure,

however, your Majesty will feel for the humiliated and degraded situation to which this report has reduced your daughter-in-law, the Princess of Wales; when you see her reduced to the necessity of either risking the danger that the most unfavourable interpretations should be credited; or else of stating, as I am now degraded to the necessity of stating, that not only no adulterous, or criminal, but no indecent or improper intercourse whatever, ever subsisted between Sir Sidney Smith and myself, or anything which I should have objected that all the world should have seen. I say degraded to the necessity of stating it; for your Majesty must feel that a woman's character is degraded when it is put upon her to make such statement, at the peril of the contrary being credited, unless she decidedly contradicts it. Sir Sidney Smith's absence from the country prevents me calling upon him to attest the same truth. But I trust, when your Majesty shall find, as you will find, that my declaration to a similar effect, with respect to the other gentleman referred to in this report, is confirmed by their denial, that your Majesty will think that in a case where nothing but my own word can be adduced, my own word alone may be opposed to whatever little remains of credit or weight may, after all the above observations, be supposed yet to belong

to Mr. Cole, to his inferences, his insinuations, or his facts. Not, indeed, that I have yet finished my observations on Mr. Cole's credit; but I must reserve the remainder till I consider his evidence with respect to Mr. Lawrence; and till I have occasion to comment upon the testimony of Fanny Loyd. Then, indeed, I shall be under the necessity of exhibiting to your Majesty these witnesses, Fanny Loyd and Mr. Cole, (both of whom are represented as so unbiassed, and so credible,) in flat, decisive, and irreconcilable contradiction to each other."

After all the deliberations and meetings of the commissioners, as far as regards Sir Sidney Smith, and other questions in connexion with the Princess, his Majesty says—

"On the other matters produced in the course of the inquiry, the King is advised that none of the facts or allegations stated in the preliminary examinations, carried on in the absence of the parties interested, can be considered as legally or conclusively established. But in those examinations, and even in the answer drawn in the name of the Princess by her legal advisers, there have appeared circumstances of conduct on the part of the Princess, which his Majesty never could regard but with serious concern. The elevated rank which the Princess hold in this

country, and the relation in which she stands to his Majesty and the royal family, must always deeply involve both the interests of the state and the personal feelings of his Majesty, in the propriety and correctness of her conduct. And his Majesty cannot, therefore, forbear to express, in the conclusion of the business, his desire and expectation, that such a conduct may in future be observed by the Princess, as may fully justify those marks of paternal regard and affection which the King always wishes to show to every part of his royal family.

"His Majesty has directed that this message should be transmitted to the Princess of Wales, by his Lord Chancellor, and that copies of the proceedings which have taken place on the subject should also be communicated to his dearly beloved son, the Prince of Wales."

Therefore, from the charge of levity and imprudence, the Princess must still be deemed as not exonerated.

We should not have adverted, in the slightest degree, to the affair narrated in this chapter, had it not assumed, to all intents and purposes, the features of a public transaction. We have called these volumes by a name no more pretending than that of "Memoirs;" and having meant to do no more than the title warranted,

we have only given so much of our hero's private adventures and family concerns as was needful to form something like continuity in the narrative. Indeed, we are well aware, so replete as Sir William Sidney Smith's life has been of "moving accident by flood and field,"—so rife has been his prolonged days with private enterprise and wonderful surprises—in a word, the feats he has performed and witnessed have been so numerous and so strange, and his memory is stuffed so full of anecdote, that none but himself could be his biographer: for no one can tell the tales of himself that he can; and if any one could, disappointment would still be the result, for to achieve his happy manner of telling them would be utterly impossible.

Many of these anecdotes have found their way into the public periodicals: generally speaking, they do not read well, because the hero did not himself write them. They are turgid and overstrained, being miserably bloated and swelled out with too much panegyric. We shall quote a few of them at the end of these volumes, and endeavour to divest them a little of their inflated laudation.

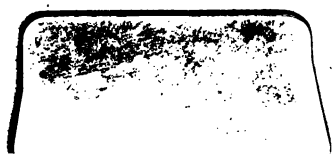
We may just now, moreover, observe, that to write a good life, in the extended sense of the word, of the gallant veteran, would be a matter of no

small difficulty, were it rigidly a true one; and a biography, however amusing, if not true, could not be good. It is in this that the difficulty lies,—the impossibility to find a person sufficiently impartial. Were Sir Sidney himself to attempt it, much of it would appear, from him, like gasconade, simply because his adventures have been so singular that it would be hazardous for a man to publish them of himself; and unfortunately, such are his qualities, that his friends are very friends indeed, and verge too much upon idolaters; and his enemies are contemning sceptics of anything good or great about him. Whilst the one party would extol him, as the *ne plus ultra* of heroism, the other would designate him merely as a successful charlatan — brave, but without conduct, cunning without being sensible—arrogant and supercilious in his youth, and, in his after life, immersed in the vapours of his intolerable vanity; that all that ever was sterling in the man is totally evaporated, and that nothing remains of him but a gaudy shell, tricked out with ribbons and stars, and all the blazonry of which beggarly monarchs are so lavish, and fools so greedy.

That Sir Sidney has nothing of the latter character about him, those who attentively read these memoirs must be convinced. They must

also be convinced that he is, properly speaking, truly a great man, and had more favourable opportunities presented themselves, would have been a much greater, perhaps the very greatest man of his time—or nothing. We have always thought, and always said, that he possessed wonderful but dangerous faculties; that he is a sort of warrior Lord Brougham, though a much pleasanter fellow. We do not mean to say that his lordship is not a very pleasant man; but still, after his public avowal of his inability to play the courtier, he will not consider us as libellous in saying, that it is possible there may be pleasanter men, and that our fine old admiral is one of them, though we fear he will not take the comparison altogether as a compliment.

We must resume our narrative in the next volume.

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON:
IBOTSON AND PALMER, PRINTERS, SAVOY-STREET, STRAND.